# NEW ZION IN BABYLON

*The Orthodox Church in the Twentieth Century*

## Part 5: THE ZENITH OF ECUMENISM (1964-1990)

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## *A NEW ROCOR METROPOLITAN*

On May 14/27, 1964, Metropolitan Anastasy retired (he died in 1965). His period as first hierarch represents a "holding operation", a preservation of the status quo in a very difficult period interrupted by the chaos of the Second World War. It left certain important questions unanswered – questions which would have to be answered unambiguously sooner or later. But it at any rate kept the voice of opposition to the MP alive in the West.

There was such animosity between the supporters of the two candidates for the vacant post, Archbishops Nicon and John Maximovich, that to avoid a schism Archbishop John withdrew his own candidature and put forward in his place the youngest bishop, Philaret (Voznesensky) of Brisbane.[1] The suggestion was then universally accepted, and Bishop Philaret was enthroned by Metropolitan Anastasy himself in a service that used the ancient text for the enthroning of a metropolitan of Moscow for the first time in centuries.

The new metropolitan's endurance of torture for Christ at the hands of the Japanese pagans in Manchuria has already been described. During the Soviet occupation he continued to show great courage, refusing to accept a Soviet passport or commemorate the authorities, although he unwillingly found himself in the Moscow Patriarchate. Later, the Chinese even unsuccessfully tried to blow up the confessor in the house in which he was living.

Archimandrite Philaret left China in 1961, only after almost the whole of his flock had left Harbin. "While striving to guard my flock from Soviet falsehood and lies," he recounted, "I myself sometimes felt inexpressibly oppressed – to the point that I several times came close to the decision to leave altogether – to cease serving. And I was stopped only by the thought of my flock: how could I leave these little ones? If I went and stopped serving, that would mean that they would have to enter into service to the Soviets and hear prayers for the forerunners of the Antichrist – 'Lord, preserve them for many years,' etc. This stopped me and forced me to carry out my duty to the end.

"And when, finally, with the help of God I managed to extract myself from red China, the first thing I did was turn to the First Hierarch of the Russian Church Abroad, Metropolitan Anastasy, with a request that he consider me again to be in the jurisdiction of the Russian Church Abroad. Vladyka Metropolitan replied with mercy and love, and immediately blessed me to serve in Hong Kong already as a priest of the Synodal jurisdiction, and pointed out that every church server passing into this jurisdiction from the jurisdiction of Moscow must give a special penitential declaration to the effect that he is sorry about his (albeit involuntary) stay in the Moscow jurisdiction. I did this immediately."

[1] According to one source, Archbishop John's candidature was especially opposed by Archbishop Anthony of Geneva. The two men had never been friends…

Soon Fr. Philaret flew to Australia and arrived in Sydney. The ruling Archbishop of Australia accepted him with joy and love, and already in the first weeks of Fr. Philaret's stay in Australia began to speak about the possibility of ordaining him as a Bishop. In 1963 he was ordained Bishop of Brisbane, a vicariate of the Australian diocese. In his sermon at his nomination as Bishop Archimandrite Philaret said to the Archpastors who were present:

"Holy Hierarchs of God! I have thought and felt much in these last days, I have reviewed and examined the whole of my life – and… I see, on the one hand, a chain of innumerable benefactions from God, and on the other – the countless number of my sins… And so raise your hierarchical prayers for my wretchedness in this truly terrible hour of my ordination, that the Lord, the First of Pastors, Who through your holiness is calling me to the height of this service, may not deprive me, the sinful and wretched one, of a place and lot among His chosen ones…

"One hierarch-elder, on placing the hierarchical staff in the hands of a newly appointed bishop, said to him: 'Do not be like a milestone on the way, that points out for others the road ahead, but itself remains in its place…' Pray also for this, Fathers and Archpastors, that in preaching to others, I myself may not turn out to be an idle slave."

The new metropolitan faced a daunting task. For he had, on the one hand, to lead his Church in decisively denouncing the apostasy of World Orthodoxy, communion with which could no longer be tolerated. And on the other, he had to preserve unity among the members of his own Synod, some of whom were in spirit closer to "World Orthodoxy" than True Orthodoxy…

The first Official Epistle of a Hierarchical Council of ROCOR under her new metropolitan was dated June 4/17, 1964, and appeared to continue the line adopted by Metropolitan Anastasy in relation to the MP: "They [the God-opposing Communists] have contrived a new, truly diabolical plan in their war against the faithful: it is now forbidden by the godless government of the USSR for children and young men and women from the ages of 3 to 18 to be allowed into God's churches and to be communed with the Body and Blood of Christ. And in order to mock the Church even more, this directive by the authorities has to be enforced by the clergymen themselves – they are the ones who must prohibit youth from approaching the Chalice of Christ and demand the removal of children and youth from the churches"….

"But the true situation is this: not many clergymen are left in the USSR, not many open churches are left, the faithful rarely can attend services And now even at these rare services, which Christians, if they are not extremely old men and women, attend at the risk of being tagged by the active Soviet "watchers" and thus lose their jobs--parents cannot bring their young children, who, in their tender childhood and youth, so need graceful communion to the Fountain of life--to Christ the Savior, just as young little saplings need the light and the warmth of the sun."

This Epistle appeared to accept the MP as a grace-bearing institution – nearly thirty years after the leading hierarchs of the Catacomb Church had rejected that position. However, in his 1965 Epistle "to Orthodox Bishops and all who hold dear the Fate of the Russian Church", Metropolitan Philaret gave the first signs that he was going to adopt a more uncompromising approach. This Epistle is also significant for the much more prominent position attributed to the Catacomb Church than during the time of his predecessor:

"In recent days the Soviet Government in Moscow and various parts of the world celebrated a new anniversary of the October Revolution of 1917 which brought it to power.

"We, on the other hand, call to mind in these days the beginning of the way of the cross for the Russian Orthodox Church, upon which from that time, as it were, all the powers of hell have fallen.

"Meeting resistance on the part of Archpastors, pastors, and laymen strong in spirit, the Communist power, in its fight with religion, began from the very first days the attempt to weaken the Church not only by killing those of her leaders who were strongest in spirit, but also by means of the artificial creation of schisms.

Thus arose the so-called "Living Church" and the renovationist movement, which had the character of a Church tied to a Protestant-Communist reformation. Notwithstanding the support of the Government, this schism was crushed by the inner power of the Church. It was too clear to believers that the 'Renovated Church' was uncanonical and altered Orthodoxy. For this reason people did not follow it.

"The second attempt, after the death of Patriarch Tikhon and the rest of the locum tenentes of the patriarchal throne, Metropolitan Peter, had greater success. The Soviet power succeeded in 1927 in sundering in part the inner unity of the Church. By confinement in prison, torture, and special methods it broke the will of the vicar of the patriarchal locum tenens, Metropolitan Sergius, and secured from him the proclamation of a declaration of the complete loyalty of the Church to the Soviet power, even to the point where the joys and successes of the Soviet Union were declared by the Metropolitan to the joys and successes of the Church, and its failures to be her failures. What can be more blasphemous than such an idea, which was justly appraised by many at that time as an attempt to unite light with darkness, and Christ with Belial. Both Patriarch Tikhon and Metropolitan Peter, as well as others who served as locum tenens of the Patriarchal throne, had earlier refused to sign a similar declaration, for which they were subjected to arrest, imprisonment, and banishment.

"Protesting against this declaration—which was proclaimed by Metropolitan Sergius by himself alone, without the agreement of the suppressed majority of the episcopate of the Russian Church, violating thus the 34th Apostolic Canon—many

bishops who were then in the death camp at Solovki wrote to the Metropolitan: 'Any government can sometimes make decisions that are foolish, unjust, cruel, to which the Church is forced to submit, but which she cannot rejoice over or approve. One of the aims of the Soviet Government is the extirpation of religion, but the Church cannot acknowledge its successes in this direction as her own successes' (Open Letter from Solovki, September 27, 1927).

"The courageous majority of the sons of the Russian Church did not accept the declaration of Metropolitan Sergius, considering that a union of the Church with the godless Soviet State, which had set itself the goal of annihilating Christianity in general, could not exist on principle.

"But a schism nonetheless occurred. The minority, accepting the declaration, formed a central administration, the so-called 'Moscow Patriarchate,' which, while being supposedly officially recognized by the authorities, in actual fact received no legal rights whatever from them; for they continued, now without hindrance, a most cruel persecution of the Church. In the words of Joseph, Metropolitan of Petrograd, Metropolitan Sergius, having proclaimed the declaration, entered upon the path of 'monstrous arbitrariness, flattery, and betrayal of the Church to the interests of atheism and the destruction of the Church.'

"The majority, renouncing the declaration, began an illegal ecclesiastical existence. Almost all the bishops were tortured and killed in death camps, among them the locum tenentes Metropolitan Peter and Metropolitan Cyril of Kazan, who was respected by all, and Metropolitan Joseph of Petrograd, who was shot to death at the end of 1938, as well as many other bishops and thousands of priests, monks, nuns, and courageous laymen. Those bishops and clergy who miraculously remained alive began to live illegally and to serve Divine services secretly, hiding themselves from the authorities and originating in this fashion the Catacomb Church in the Soviet Union.

"Little news of this Church has come to the free world. The Soviet press long kept silent about her, wishing to give the impression that all believers in the USSR stood behind the Moscow Patriarchate. They even attempted to deny entirely the existence of the Catacomb Church.

"But then, after the death of Stalin and the exposure of his activity, and especially after the fall of Khrushchev, the Soviet press has begun to write more and more often on the secret Church in the USSR, calling it the 'sect' of True-Orthodox Christians. It was apparently impossible to keep silence about it any longer; its numbers are too great and it causes the authorities too much alarm.

"Unexpectedly in the *Atheist Dictionary* (Moscow, 1964), on pages 123 and 124 the Catacomb Church is openly discussed. ''True-Orthodox Christians,' we read in the *Dictionary*, 'an Orthodox sect, originating in the years 1922-24. It was organized in 1927, when Metropolitan Sergius proclaimed the principle of loyalty to the Soviet

power.' 'Monarchist' (we would say ecclesiastical) 'elements, having united around Metropolitan Joseph (Petrovykh) of Leningrad' (Petrograd) — the Josephites,' or, as the same Dictionary says, the Tikhonites, formed in 1928 a guiding centre, the True-Orthodox Church, and united all groups and elements which came out against the Soviet order' (we may add from ourselves, 'atheist' order). 'The True-Orthodox Church directed unto the villages a multitude of monks and nuns,' for the most part of course priests, we add again from ourselves, who celebrated Divine services and rites secretly and 'conducted propaganda against the leadership of the Orthodox Church,' i.e, against the Moscow Patriarchate which had given in to the Soviet power, 'appealing to people not to submit to Soviet laws,' which are directed, quite apparently, against the Church of Christ and faith. By the testimony of the *Atheist Dictionary*, the True-Orthodox Christians organized and continue to organize house, 'i.e., secret, catacomb churches and monasteries... preserving in full the doctrine and rites of Orthodoxy.' They 'do not acknowledge the authority of the Orthodox Patriarch,' i.e., the successor of Metropolitan Sergius, Patriarch Alexis.

"'Striving to fence off' the True-Orthodox Christians 'from the influence of Soviet reality,' chiefly of course from atheist propaganda, 'their leaders... make use of the myth of Antichrist, who has supposedly been ruling in the world since 1917.' The anti-Christian nature of the Soviet power is undoubted for any sound-thinking person, and all the more for a Christian.

"True Orthodox Christians 'usually refuse to participate in elections,' which in the Soviet Union, a country deprived of freedom, are simply a comedy, 'and other public functions; they do not accept pensions, do not allow their children to go to school beyond the fourth class...' Here is an unexpected Soviet testimony of the truth, to which nothing need be added.

"Honour and praise to the True-Orthodox Christians, heroes of the spirit and confessors, who have not bowed before the terrible power, which can stand only by terror and force and has become accustomed to the abject flattery of its subjects. The Soviet rulers fall into a rage over the fact that there exist people who fear God more than men. They are powerless before the millions of True-Orthodox Christians.

"However, besides the True Orthodox Church in the Soviet Union and the Moscow Patriarchate, which have communion neither of prayer nor of any other kind with each other, there exists yet a part of the Russian Church—free from oppression and persecution by the atheists the Russian Orthodox Church Outside of Russia. She has never broken the spiritual and prayerful bonds with the Catacomb Church in the home land. After the last war many members of this Church appeared abroad and entered into the Russian Church Outside Russia, and thus the bond between these two Churches was strengthened yet more—a bond which has been sustained illegally up to the present time. As time goes on, it becomes all the stronger and better established.

"The part of the Russian Church that is abroad and free is called upon to speak in

the free world in the name of the persecuted Catacomb Church in the Soviet Union; she reveals to all the truly tragic condition of believers in the USSR, which the atheist power so carefully hushes up, with the aid of the Moscow Patriarchate, she calls on those who have not lost shame and conscience to help the persecuted.

"This is why it is our sacred duty to watch over the existence of the Russian Church Outside of Russia. The Lord, the searcher of hearts, having permitted His Church to be subjected to oppression, persecution, and deprivation of all rights in the godless Soviet State, has given us, Russian exiles, in the free world the talent of freedom, and He expects from us the increase of this talent and a skilful use of it. And we have not the right to hide it in the earth. Let no one dare to say to us that we should do this, let no one push us to a mortal sin. For the fate of our Russian Church we, Russian bishops, are responsible before God, and no one in the world can free us from this sacred obligation. No one can understand better than we what is happening in our homeland, of which no one can have any doubt. Many times foreigners, even Orthodox people and those vested with high ecclesiastical rank, have made gross errors in connection with the Russian Church and false conclusions concerning her present condition. May God forgive them this, since they do not know what they are doing.

"We shall not cease to accuse the godless persecutors of faith and those who evilly cooperate with them under the exterior of supposed representatives of the Church. In this the Russian Church Outside of Russia has always seen one of her important tasks. Knowing this, the Soviet power through its agents wages with her a stubborn battle, not hesitating to use any means: lies, bribes, gifts, and intimidation. We, however, shall not suspend our accusation.

"Declaring this before the face of the whole world, I appeal to all our brothers in Christ—Orthodox bishops—and to all people who hold dear the fate of the persecuted Russian Church as a part of the Universal Church of Christ, for understanding, support, and their holy prayers. As for our spiritual children, we call on them to hold firmly to the truth of Orthodoxy, witnessing of her both by one's word and especially by a prayerful, devout Christian life."

The prominence given to the Catacomb Church by Metropolitan Philaret was timely. The True Orthodox Christians inside the Soviet Union were going through a very difficult period. True bishops were exceedingly few: Schema-Bishop Peter (Ladygin) of Nizhegorod died in Glazov in 1957, leaving no successor, as did Bishop Barnabas (Belyaev) of Pechersk in Kiev in 1963 and Bishop Michael (Yershov) of Chistopol in the Mordovian camps in 1974. Catacomb priests served their widely scattered flocks in the greatest secrecy without any archpastoral support. Many now began to commemorate the first-hierarchs of the Russian Church Abroad, who thereby became de facto the leaders of the whole of the Russian Church…

## ***THE LIFTING OF THE ANATHEMAS***

Since the founding of the World Council of Churches in 1948, the leader of the ecumenical movement on the Orthodox side had been the Ecumenical Patriarch Athenagoras. The key figure on the Catholic side was Pope John XXIII, who early in the 1960s convened the three-year Vatican II Council, which thrust forward an ecumenist agenda. "One of the council's key documents, Unitatis Redintegratio (Restoration of Unity), issued in 1964, identified "restoration of unity among all Christians" as a key long-term goal. The document described baptized Christians who profess faith in another church as "separated brethren", not as "heretics", the term commonly used for centuries prior."[2]

Olga Chetverikova writes: "Setting as one of its central aims the leadership of Catholicism in the movement for Christian unity, the Council formulated its own ecumenical conception, as an alternative to the way of the Protestants, which allowed it to open itself out to dialogue to other religions, while keeping untouched its position on the power of the pontiff. In the dogmatic constitution on the Church (Lumen Gentium), it was affirmed that the Church of Christ, 'established and constructed in this world as a community remains in the Catholic Church ruled by the successor of Peter and the bishops in communion with him', but now it was added that 'even outside her membership there exist many principles of sanctification and truth, which, being gifts, are proper to the Church of Christ, and propel towards Catholic unity'. Thus the Council defined two basic points in its relations with other churches. It affirmed that it was possible to receive 'the whole fullness of means of salvation' only through the Catholic Church, but at the same time it recognized that other ecclesiastical communities, linked to her by virtue of baptism, 'can, in different ways, corresponding to the particular situation of each church or community, truly engender the life of grace', and 'they are capable of opening access to saving communion'. Although the latter 'suffer from certain faults, nevertheless they are endowed with significance and weight in the mystery of salvation'. The main reversal in ecumenical consciousness consisted in the conclusion that 'those who believe in Christ and have been baptized in the right manner are in definite communion with the Catholic Church, albeit not complete, while full communion is possible only with the recognition of the power of the successor of Peter, that is, the Pontiff of Rome.'"[3]

The new ecumenist course was sealed on January 5 and 6, 1964, when Pope Paul VI and Patriarch Athenagoras of Constantinople met in Jerusalem and prayed together. This was a clear transgression of the canons concerning relations with heretics (Apostolic canon 45). Archbishop Chrysostom of Athens was reported as saying that "while the Pope is going to the Holy Land to kneel before the Saviour's

[2] Victor Gaetan, "The Church Undivided", *Foreign Affairs,* May-June, 2013, p. 118.
[3] Chetverikova, *Izmena v Vatikane ili Zagovor Pap protiv Khristianstva* (Betrayal in the Vatican, or the Conspiracy of the Popes against Christianity), Moscow, 2011, p. 35.

sepulchre, you (Athenagoras) are going to kneel before the Pope and bury Orthodoxy."[4]

On January 23 / February 5, 1964 a large number of Athonite monks, including the abbots of four monasteries, protested against this ecumenical activity: "the undersigned Fathers of the Holy Mountain, abbots, priest-monks and monks, learning of the recent machinations and plots against our blameless Orthodox Faith by the Papal insurrection and of the pro-uniate actions and statements of the Ecumenical Patriarch and his co-workers, do proclaim with a stentorian voice that we denounce these uniate tendencies and leanings, and remains steadfast and unshaken in our Orthodox Faith…"[5]

Unfortunately, however, this "stentorian voice" became more and more muted, until only the Monastery of Esphigmenou remained out of communion of the Ecumenical Patriarchate…

The calendar question again reared its head during this period. Thus during the Second Pan-Orthodox Conference, the Church of Greece had threatened to boycott the meeting if the calendar question were raised. "But the representatives of the Jerusalem Patriarchate," writes Bishop Ephraim, "insisted that the calendar be placed upon the agenda for discussion, and with good reason. The Jerusalem Patriarchate is especially interested in settling the calendar issue because of its position as a place of pilgrimage. When Athenagoras met Pope Paul in Jerusalem, he went afterwards to Bethlehem to attend the service for Christmas (which, of course, is celebrated there according to the Old Calendar). In the meantime, the new calendarists were celebrating Epiphany in Constantinople. By the time Athenagoras returned to Istanbul, Epiphany had already been celebrated. In other words, Athenagoras himself, because of this calendar confusion, celebrated two Christmases but did not celebrate Epiphany that year. Also, many pious pilgrims came from Greece to celebrate Christmas in Bethlehem, not knowing that the Jerusalem Patriarchate follows the Old Calendar… They arrive in Bethlehem and discover that it is only St. Spyridon's day and that Christmas is two weeks away. They have only arranged to stay for a few days, and few are those who have made the provisions or have the money to wait for two weeks. In their dismay, they beg the priests there to chant a few Christmas troparia and, of course, the priests refuse, because not only is it not Christmas according to their reckoning, but they are also in the midst of the fast. The pilgrims return to Greece confused and disheartened since they did not get to celebrate Christmas, even in Bethlehem, and Christmas has already been celebrated in Greece. Therefore, that year they do not celebrate Christmas anywhere. This happens annually there – hence Jerusalem's concern."[6]

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[4] Ulrich Duckrow, *Conflict over the Ecumenical Movement*, Geneva: The World Council of Churches, 1981, p. 53.

[5] Proclamation of the Holy Mountain, in Alexander Kalomiros, *Against False Union,* Seattle: St. Nectarios Press, 2000, p. 101.

[6] Monk Ephraim, *Letter on the Calendar Issue*, op. cit.

"Immediately after the Holy Land meeting," writes Fr. George Macris, "a proclamation of the whole monastic community of Mount Athos to 'the pious Orthodox Greek people and the whole of the Orthodox Church' denounced the 'pro-uniate actions and statements' of the Patriarch and his co-workers."[7]

In 1964 several parishes in the USA, Canada and Australia under Archbishop Photius, formerly of Paphos (Cyprus), left the Ecumenical Patriarchate. Their basic reasons were the dependence of the patriarchate on the Turks, the rapprochement with the Catholics, and the dictatorial behaviour of Archbishop James. In this year the Turks increased their harassment of the Ecumenical Patriarchate in Constantinople. Much property was confiscated, and 15,000 Greeks were deported. This led some to speculate that the Patriarch's rapprochement with the Pope was elicited by his need to find powerful friends to support him in the West – just as in 1274 and 1439. Thus in April, 1965, Archbishop James pleaded with the Pope to help the Patriarch. The Pope promised his support, whereupon the two hierarchs prayed together.[8]

Further intense activity led, on December 7, 1965, to the "lifting of the anathemas" of 1054 between Orthodoxy and the Papacy. The announcement was made simultaneously in Rome and Constantinople. It included the following words: "Pope Paul VI and Patriarch Athenagoras I with his synod, in common agreement, declare that: a) They regret the offensive words, the reproaches without foundation, and the reprehensible gestures which, on both sides, have marked or accompanied the sad events of this period [viz. in the 11th century]. b) They likewise regret and remove both from memory and from the midst of the Church the sentences of excommunication which followed these events, the memory of which has influenced actions up to our day and has hindered closer relations in charity; and they commit these excommunications to oblivion. We must recognize that the sentences were directed at particular persons and not at the Churches, and did not aim to break ecclesiastical communion between the sees of Rome and Constantinople."[9] "In short," writes Peter Hebblethwaite in his biography of Paul VI, "1054 had been an accident, much ado about nothing very much, frozen into permanent schism only by later 'non-theological' events."[10]

The Tomos was historically inaccurate: both sees recognized in 1054 that a break in ecclesiastical communion had taken place between them. Moreover, in saying that the schism of 1054 was based on "reproaches without foundation", the Patriarch was in effect saying that the Papacy was not, or never had been, heretical – although the Papacy had renounced none of its heresies, and Pope Paul VI had reasserted papal infallibility as recently as Vatican II. Thirdly, while relations with excommunicated individuals or Churches can be restored if those individuals or Churches repent,

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[7] Monk Ephraim, op. cit., p. 57.
[8] Monk Ephraim, op. cit., pp. 72-73.
[9] Full text in *Eastern Churches Review*, vol. I, № 1, Spring, 1966, pp. 49-50.
[10] Hebblethwaite, *Paul VI: The First Modern Pope,* 1993; in Fr. Alexey Young, *The Rush to Embrace,* Richfield Springs: Nikodemos Orthodox Publication Society, 1996, p. 63.

anathemas against heresies cannot be removed insofar as a heresy remains a heresy forever. And yet in December of 1968 Athenagoras announced that he had inserted Pope Paul VI's name into the Diptychs, thereby signifying that the Pope was not a heretic and was in communion with the Orthodox Church. And he made the following formal renunciation of True Christianity: "We must pray and struggle that Jerusalem becomes a place of dialogue and peace. So that together we may prepare the way for the return of Jesus, the Mahdi of Islam, the Moshiach [Messiah] of Israel, our Lord".

Archbishop Chrysostom of Athens denied that the Patriarch had the authority to act independently of the other Orthodox Churches. And he said: "I am convinced that no other Orthodox Church will copy the Ecumenical Patriarch's action."[11] Unfortunately, he was wrong: in March, 1966 the Synod of the new calendarist Church of Cyprus approved the lifting of anathemas.[12]

ROCOR had three observers at the Vatican Council who witnessed the ceremony of the "lifting of the anathemas". One of them, Archimandrite Ambrose (Pogodin), after describing the ceremony with evident sympathy, wrote: "The Russian Church Abroad did not recognize the actions of Patriarch Athenagoras, considering that the patriarch was obliged to do this only with the agreement of all the Orthodox Churches, because the matter of the schism between the Eastern and Western Churches concerned all the Orthodox Churches – it was not only the personal relations between the Pope and the Patriarch of Constantinople. We, observers from the Russian Church Abroad, received by telephone the order from our ecclesiastical authorities not to be present at the ceremony of the mutual lifting of the anathemas between the Constantinopolitan and Roman Churches. But we, having taken counsel amongst ourselves, thought that such a demonstration would have been harmful for our Church, which we represented with dignity. However, our demonstration would have remained unnoticed: what would the absence of three people in a mass of tens of thousands of people signify?!"[13]

At this critical moment, on December 15, 1965, Metropolitan Philaret issued the first of a series of "Sorrowful Epistles" designed to warn the Orthodox against ecumenism.[14]

First, he wrote to Patriarch Athenagoras protesting against his action: "The organic belonging of the Orthodox to the union of the contemporary heretics does not sanctify the latter, while it tears away the Orthodox entering into it from Catholic Orthodox Unity… Your gesture puts a sign of equality between error and truth. For

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[11] *Ekklesia,* quoted in *Eastern Churches Review*, vol. I, № 1, Spring, 1966, p. 50.
[12] Monk Benjamin, op. cit., part 5, p. 29.
[13] Pogodin, "O Chine Priniatia v Pravoslavnuiu Tserkov'" (On the Rite of Reception into the Orthodox Church); Monk Benjamin, op. cit., part 5, pp. 24-25.
[14] It was claimed by Matushka Anastasia Shatilova that the Sorrowful Epistles were in fact written by her father, Protopresbyter George (later Bishop Gregory) Grabbe. See Andrei Psarev, "The Development of Russian Orthodox Church Outside of Russia's Attitude Toward Other Local Orthodox Churches", http://www.sobor2006.com/printerfriendly2.php?id=119_0_3_0, p. 8.

centuries all the Orthodox Churches believed with good reasons that it has violated no doctrine of the Holy Ecumenical Councils; whereas the Church of Rome has introduced a number of innovations in its dogmatic teaching. The more such innovations were introduced, the deeper was to become the separation between the East and the West. The doctrinal deviations of Rome in the eleventh century did not yet contain the errors that were added later. Therefore the cancellation of the mutual excommunication of 1054 could have been of meaning at that time, but now it is only evidence of indifference in regard to the most important errors, namely new doctrines foreign to the ancient Church, of which some, having been exposed by St. Mark of Ephesus, were the reason why the Church rejected the Union of Florence… No union of the Roman Church with us is possible until it renounces its new doctrines, and no communion in prayer can be restored with it without a decision of all the Churches, which, however, can hardly be possible before the liberation of the Church of Russia which at present has to live in the catacombs… A true dialogue implies an exchange of views with a possibility of persuading the participants to attain an agreement. As one can perceive from the Encyclical Ecclesiam Suam, Pope Paul VI understands the dialogue as a plan for our union with Rome with the help of some formula which would, however, leave unaltered its doctrines, and particularly its dogmatic doctrine about the position of the Pope in the Church. However, any compromise with error is foreign to the history of the Orthodox Church and to the essence of the Church. It could not bring a harmony in the confessions of the Faith, but only an illusory outward unity similar to the conciliation of dissident Protestant communities in the ecumenical movement."[15]

Tatiana (now Nun Cassia) Senina writes: "Metropolitan Philaret sent a similar address to another leader of the ecumenical movement – the American Archbishop James. However, the apostate hierarchs paid no attention to his exhortations. The ecumenical movement continued to gather speed. The holy Hierarch Philaret looked with sorrow on the falling away from the faith of the once Orthodox Churches. And he called the epistles which he sent to all the hierarchs of the Orthodox Church just that – 'Sorrowful Epistles'. In his first Epistle, written in 1969, St. Philaret says that he has decided to turn to all the hierarchs, 'some of whom occupy the oldest and most glorious sees', because, in the words of St. Gregory the Theologian, 'the truth is betrayed by silence', and it is impossible to keep silent when you see a deviation from the purity of Orthodoxy – after all, every bishop at his ordination gives a promise to keep the Faith and the canons of the holy fathers and defend Orthodoxy from heresies. Vladyka quotes various ecumenist declarations of the World Council of Churches (WCC) and clearly shows, on the basis of the patristic teaching and the canons, that the position of the WCC has nothing in common with Orthodoxy, and consequently the Orthodox Churches must not participate in the work of this council. The holy Hierarch Philaret also emphasises that the voice of the MP is not the voice of the True Russian Church, which in the homeland is persecuted and hides in the catacombs. Vladyka calls on all the Orthodox hierarchs to stand up in defence of the purity of Orthodoxy.

[15] Full text in Ivan Ostroumoff, *The History of the Council of Florence*, pp. 193-199.

"Vladyka Philaret wrote his second 'Sorrowful Epistle' on the Sunday of Orthodoxy, 1972. In it he noted that although in the last two years hierarchs had made declarations about the heterodoxy of the ecumenical movement, not one Orthodox Church had declared that it was leaving the WCC. Vladyka placed as the aim of his Second Epistle 'to show that abyss of heresy against the very concept of the Church into which all the participants in the ecumenical movement are being drawn'. He recalled the threatening prophecy of the Apostle Paul that to those who will not receive 'the love of the truth for salvation' the Lord will send 'strong delusion, that they should believe a lie. That they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness' (II Thessalonians 2.10-12). St. Philaret's third Epistle was devoted to the so-called 'Thyateira Confession' of Metropolitan Athenagoras [of Thyateira and Great Britain], the exarch of the Constantinopolitan Patriarchate in Europe – a document written in a completely heretical spirit, but which did not elicit any reaction from the leaders of the 'official churches'. Evidently Vladyka Philaret hoped at the beginning that at any rate one of the bishops of 'World Orthodoxy' might listen to his words, which is why he addressed them in his epistles as true Archpastors of the Church. Besides, attempts at exhortation corresponded to the apostolic command: 'A man that is a heretic after the first and second admonition reject, knowing that he that is such is subverted, and sinneth, being condemned of himself' (Titus 3. 10-11). It was fitting, before accepting an anathema against the apostates, to try and convert them from their error.

"Alas, no conversion took place, and the ecumenical impiety continued to pour out. Vladyka addressed his word not only to bishops, but also to their flock, untiringly explaining the danger of the new heresy. While telling about the zeal of St. Nicholas the Wonderworker, who slapped the face of Arius when he blasphemed against the Son of God, Vladyka said: 'O how often we do not have enough of such zeal when it is really necessary to speak for the insulted and trodden-on truth! I want to tell you about one incident that took place not long ago and which it would have been difficult even to imagine several years ago – and now we are going further and further downhill all the time. One man came from Paris and said that the following incident had taken place at a so-called "ecumenical meeting'. Of course, you know what ecumenism is; it is ***the heresy of heresies.*** It wants to completely wipe out the concept of the Orthodox Church as the guardian of the Truth, and to create some kind of new, strange church. And so there took place this 'ecumenical meeting'. Present were a so-called Orthodox protopriest from the Paris Theological (more exactly, heretical) Institute, a Jewish rabbi, a pastor and a Catholic priest. At first they sort of prayed, and then began the speeches. And then (forgive me for saying such things from the holy ambon, but I want to show you what we have come to) the Jewish rabbi said that the Lord Jesus Christ was the illegitimate son of a dissolute woman…

"'But that's not the main horror. The Jewish people has opposed God for a long time… - so there's nothing surprising in this. But the horror was that when he said this ***everyone*** was silent. Later, a man who had heard this terrible blasphemy asked the 'Orthodox' protopriest: 'How could you keep silent?' He replied: 'I didn't want

to offend this Jew.' It's wrong to offend a Jew, but to insult the All-Pure Virgin Mary is permitted! Look at the state we have come to! How often does it happen to us all now that we do not have the zeal to stand up, when necessary, in defence of our holy things! The Orthodox cleric must zealously stand up against blasphemy, just as the holy Hierarch Nicholas stopped the mouth of the heretic… But now, unfortunately, we have become, as the saying goes, 'shamefully indifferent to both the evil and the good'. And it is precisely in the soil of this indifference, of a kind of feeling of self-preservation, that the heresy of ecumenism has established itself – as also apostasy, that falling away which is becoming more and more evident… Let us remember, brethren, that Christian love embraces all in itself, is compassionate to all, wishes that all be saved and is sorry for, and merciful to, and love every creature of God; but where it sees a conscious assault on the truth it turns into fiery zeal which cannot bear any such blasphemy… And so must it always be, because every Orthodox Christian must always be zealous for God."[16]

"Patriarch" Athenagoras expressed, perhaps better than any contemporary church leader, what ecumenism really means for its adherents. As Basil (now Bishop Gregory) Lourié writes: "Athenagoras … did not consider [the Latins] to be heretics. But his denial of their hereticalness was not the manifestation of a special love for them: Athenagoras did not recognise the existence of heresy in general! On hearing of a certain man who saw heresy everywhere, Athenagoras said: 'I don't see them anywhere! I see only truths, partial truths, reduced truths, truths that are sometimes out of place…'

"The teaching of the Church, of the Holy Fathers, is based on the rock of the confession of the fullness of the Truth incarnate in Christ, which is organically incapable of being mixed with lies. The ecumenists consciously choose the sand of 'partial truths' cemented by the lie of the denial of Christ as the true Son and Word of God.

"Why can Athenagoras and people like him, who are characterised by their own kind of deep faith, asceticism and even capacity for sacrifice, completely consciously go against, not simply individual Fathers, but even all of them taken together? Why have they come to the decision that certain decrees of the Fathers in relation to the Church and the dogmas may supposedly have lost their force in our time? There can only be one answer: their Orthodox faith was been mixed with certain tares, which have grown up and suffocated the shoots of Truth. The tares are faith in something about which the Lord did not announce to the Church. This is what we read in this connection in Athenagoras himself: 'Palestine has again become the centre of the world… We must pray and struggle that Jerusalem may again become a place of dialogue and peace. So that we may together prepare the way for the return of Jesus, the Mahdi of Islam, the Messiah of Israel, our Lord.' 'In Jerusalem Abraham met Melchizedek, a priest of the Most High God, a mystical foreshadowing of the Word which is present in all peoples and in all religions.' (This is how Athenagoras explains why he and the Roman Pope Paul VI decided to meet in Jerusalem.) The

[16] Senina, "And his lot is among the saints…", *Vertograd-Inform*, № 15, January, 2000, pp. 15-17.

union with the Latins was seen by Athenagoras in connection with this coming advent of the person he called Jesus: 'Unity may be attained unexpectedly, as is the case with everything great. As can happen with the return of Christ, Who, as He said, will come as a thief. Catholicism is now in a vortex. Everything is possible.' Neither Athenagoras nor the other ecumenists refer to any other positions based on Church Tradition. And not surprisingly. The teaching of the Church foresees the union of all peoples, not around Christ, but around him whom the Jews call the Messiah, and the Muslims Mahdi [the Antichrist]. 'When the Son of Man comes will He find faith on the earth?' (Luke 18.8).

"But this Tradition of the Church has ceased to be of interest to them because they have accepted another: faith that some special age has dawned precisely now. If all the people of this age understand its content, they will turn out to be much more closely united with each other than with their co-religionists of previous ages. The people of this age are united by certain 'pan-human', as they put it, values of their own, values which are much more important to them than the heritage of the past, which disunites them. This is that age of which the bearers of the so-called 'Russian religious philosophy' (particularly Soloviev, Berdyaev, Florensky and Bulgakov) became the heralds throughout the world. These people expressed in a pseudo-Christian language the idea of the coming of a 'new age' – the age of some new, post-New Testament 'revelation of the Holy Spirit', which would be given in the last times, and which they borrowed from occult teachings. (See, for example, the letter on the Holy Spirit in Florensky's *The Pillar and Ground of the Truth*.) For these people there exists some kind of special 'age of the Fathers', which is already completely past. With it have also gone into the past the canons of the Fathers. In our time, instead of the Fathers there are those who have received the new revelation of the new age. And so for the Orthodox Church today ecumenism is not a particular problem which might pass some countries by. But at the same time it is only a particular case of a more widespread phenomenon – the placing of the whole of contemporary civilisation on a new principle of unity. It is on this principle that the universal religion which Hieromonk Seraphim Rose of blessed memory (+1982) called 'the religion of the future', the religion of the Antichrist, is being created at the present time.

"This principle is much more clearly formulated in various movements of the 'New Age' and Masonry type, while ecumenism is called to carry out only one particular task: force the entry into this new unity of such people as would wish to preserve their unity with traditional forms of religion. The Antichrist will have to satisfy everyone…"[17]

Hieromonk Seraphim wrote with regard to an article written by Archbishop James entitled "A New Epoch?": "I suddenly felt that I had found an insight into the 'essence of Iakovism'. Is it not, indeed, the basic heresy of *chiliasm*? What else, indeed, could justify such immense changes and monstrous perversions in

[17] Lourié, "The Ecclesiology of a Retreating Army", *Vertograd-Inform*, № 3, January, 1999, pp. 24-25 (English edition).

Orthodoxy except the concept that we are entering entirely new historical circumstances, an entirely new *kind* of time, in which the concepts of the past are no longer relevant, but we must be guided by the voices of the new time? Does not Fr. Patrinacos, in past issues of the *Orthodox Observer*, justify Patriarch Athenagoras – not as a theologian, not as a traditionalist, but precisely as a *prophet*, as one whose heresies cannot be condemned because he already lives in the 'new time', ahead of his own times? Patriarch Athenagoras himself has been quoted as speaking of the coming of the 'Third Age of the Holy Spirit' – a clearly chiliastic idea which has its chief recent champion in N. Berdyaev, and can be traced back directly to Joachim of Fiore, and indirectly to the Montanists. The whole idea of a 'new age', of course, penetrates every fiber of the last two centuries with their preoccupation with 'progress', and is *the* key idea of the very concept of Revolution (from French to Bolshevik), is the central idea of modern occultism (visible on the popular level in today's talk of the 'age of Aquarius', the astrological post-Christian age), and has owed its spread probably chiefly to Freemasonry (there's a Scottish Rite publication in America called 'New Age'). (I regret to say that the whole philosophy is also present in the American dollar bill with its masonic heritage, with its novus ordo saeculorum and its unfinished pyramid, awaiting the thirteenth stone on top!) In Christian terms, it is the philosophy of Antichrist, the one who will turn the world upside down and 'change the times and seasons.'… And the whole concept of ecumenism is, of course, permeated with this heresy and the 'refounding of the Church'."[18]

[18] Fr. Seraphim Rose, in Hieromonk Damascene (Christensen), *Father Seraphim Rose: His Life and Works,* Platina, Ca.: St. Herman of Alaska Press, 2003, p. 397.

## *A SECOND ROMANIAN HIERARCHY*

There was another Old Calendar hierarchy in Romania whose origins went back to the immediate post-war period.[19] In 1948, at the request – more precisely, order - of the Soviets, the new calendarist Romanian Church was obliged to surrender its parishes in the diaspora and let them come under the jurisdiction of the Moscow patriarchate. Worried by the danger this posed for their flock, several bishops, foremost among them Grigorie Leu of Husi and Chesarie of Tomis, decided to send the priests Florian Galdau and Vasile Leu, the son of Bishop Grigorie, to help the aged and sick Metropolitan Visarion Puiu. Since Fr. Vasile's wife had died, he was tonsured on August 21, 1948 in preparation for consecration to the episcopate with the name Victor.

On August 21, 1948 the two priests left Romania, and after jumping from the train at Isanova railway station, entered Yugoslavia, where they were arrested and interrogated by Yugoslav security. They succeeded in escaping and reached Austria. There, after staying for a time in a camp, they were set free by the Allied Forces and began to serve in a church in Salzburg. Eventually, after a meeting of Romanian exiles from all over the diaspora, the Autonomous Romanian Orthodox Archiepiscopate of Western Europe was set up. Since Metropolitan Visarion was ill and paralysed in a sanatorium in Switzerland, Fr. Vasile was sent, with Visarion's blessing, to the Russian Church Abroad in Munich to be consecrated to the episcopate.

ROCOR had already given some help to the Romanian Church. Thus in the early 1930s ROCOR appealed to the Serbian Church on behalf of Russian Orthodox Christians persecuted in Romania. And Bishop Seraphim (Lyade) of Vienna was sent to Bessarabia to minister to Russian Old Calendarists led by Hieromonk Gamaliel of Niamets monastery, and ordain priests there.[20]

Now, at the request of representatives of the Romanian Archiepiscopate, Seraphim (now Metropolitan of Berlin) joined Bishop Stephen (Sevbo) of Vienna and Bishop Philip (Gardner) of Potsdam in consecrating Fr. Vasile in Munich in December, 1949, giving him the new name Vasile-Victor. However, the files of the

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[19] Most of the following information comes from an English summary, by Fr. Anthimus Bichar, of a book written by Corneliu Leu and entitled *The Life and Sufferings of the First Bishop of the Exile: Victor Leu* (Bucharest: Bishop Grigorie Leu Foundation (in Romanian)).

[20] Andrew Psarev, "The Development of Russian Orthodox Church Outside of Russia's Attitude Toward Other Local Orthodox Churches", http://www.sobor2006.com/printerfriendly2.php?id=119_0_3_0, p. 2; .Kovalevsky, "Tragicheskaia smert' mitr. Serafima (Lyade)" (The Tragic Death of Metropolitan Seraphim (Lyade), *Russkaia Mysl' (Russian Thought)*, October 4, 1950; quoted by Archbishop Ambrose (von Sievers), "Bezobrazniki: K sobytiam v RPZTs 1945-55gg." (Hooligans: Towards Events in the ROCOR from 1945 to 1955), *Russkoe Pravoslavie (Russian Orthodoxy)*, № 2 (16), 1999, p. 17; Fr. Anthimus (Bichir), "Re: [True-Faith] New Romanian OC Synod?", True-Faith@yahoogroups.com, February 3, 2002.

German diocese of ROCOR reveal no record of this consecration, and there is also no record that Philip Gardner was ever a bishop…[21]

Even before his consecration Bishop Vasile-Victor had been founding Romanian Orthodox parishes on the basis of a strong anti-communist position. He met King Michael in Switzerland, gave the sacrament of confession to Queen Anna, and met the old King Carol in Paris. He also broadcast in Romanian from the BBC in London and several radio stations in Austria, and was a regular contributor to Paris Radio. He issued thousands of certificates to Romanian refugees to enable them to obtain visas in western countries.

In Romania, meanwhile, Bishop Victor-Vasile's father, Bishop Grigorie, had suffered the abolition of his diocese of Husi, and on February 25, 1949 was summoned to Bucharest for discussions. Being a strong anti-communist who had warned about the transformation of the Romanian Church into a "Sovrom patriarchy", he was not allowed to return a healthy man. Three days later he died, probably from poisoning.

On August 16, 1952 Bishop Victor-Vasile was arrested in Vienna, injected with some substance, and kidnapped. Three days later he woke up in a Soviet prison. He was transported to the Lubyanka in Moscow, where he was interrogated for seven months and charged with working for the English and American secret services. Beria himself sometimes took part in the interrogations. He refused to ask for a pardon, and also refused to delegate anyone to make such a request on his behalf. "I consider communism to be the main enemy of the Christians," he said, "and that is why this is the goal of my life."

At the Bucharest District Law Court on November 16, 1954 he declared: "I realize that you want to find out whether I collaborated with the English information service. I said and I repeat that I haven't spied for anybody. I am an enemy of this Romanian regime, which has turned the country into a kind of prison. I carried out this activity because the communist regime is a straitjacket for the soul and essence of the Romanian people. The only decision that would honour me and the law court would be my condemnation to death."

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[21] According to Bishop Ambrose of Methone, when Fr. Glycerius approached Metropolitan Seraphim with regard to consecration in 1943, the metropolitan asked for money. So this aspect of the story seems plausible. On the other hand, Bishop Philip of Potsdam had renounced his episcopate and monasticism by this time. Also an attempt was made to verify the fact of the consecration through Archimandrite Anthony (Grabbe) of Jerusalem. He contacted his father, Protopresbyter George Grabbe, who said that he had never heard of it (personal communication).

A recent ROCOR-MP source (*Voprosy Istorii Russkoj Zarubezhnoj Tserkvi,* December, 2009, http://rocorstudies.org/index.php?part=publications&aid=10865 (in English)) appears to accept that Fr. Vasile was consecrated by Metropolitan Seraphim and Archbishop Stefan, but not by Bishop Philip.

On November 20, 1954 he was condemned to death for treason (resolution № 2417). However, he was not executed, but passed through all the prisons of Romania. In 1964 he was released. His file in the security archives is 300 pages long and reveals that he made no compromise with the authorities.

After his release, Bishop Victor-Vasile refused to join the Romanian patriarchate, but instead set off for the monastery of the Old Calendarists at Slătioara in Moldavia, where he was accepted as a bishop at first (he served with them for seven years, according to one account). However, canonical differences with the other Old Calendarists forced him to return to Bucharest. It appears that Bishop Victor-Vasile took a stricter attitude towards the Romanian new calendarists, rebaptising and remarrying them, and also could not recognize the validity of the consecration of Metropolitan Galaction, since it had been carried out in 1935, after the calendar change. On the other hand, the Old Calendarists did not accept Victor-Vasile's consecration because he did not have ordination papers, and because ROCOR had no records of his consecration.[22]

On leaving Slatioara, Bishop Victor-Vasile joined the followers of Fr. Gamaliel, who, like St. Glicherie, was a hieromonk of Neamt and rejected the calendar change, but who differed from Glicherie from the beginning over the baptism issue as also over beards (he regarded men who shaved as automatically excommunicated).

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[22] Kovalevsky, op. cit.; Bishop Ambrose of Methone, private communications, August 23, 2005 and December 22, 2009.

Stavros Markou writes: "As for Bishop Victor Leu's consecration, there actually is documentary evidence. In a biography of Fr. Constantin Moraitakis (the author of the biography is Fr. Constantin's son), it is mentioned quite clearly that Fr. Constantine met an old friend of his in Istanbul, namely, Bishop Victor Leu. Among the documents in Fr. Constantin's archive was a letter written by Bishop Victor Leu to Fr. Constantin Moraitakis in which Bishop Victor Leu write "Please find my attached consecration certificate" and "Please translate it into Greek for me." In the writings of Fr. Constantine Moraitakis it is also related that Bishop Victor Leu was consecrated by "two White Russian Bishops" to serve as "Exarch of the Bessarabians in Exile" and Fr. Constantin criticizes this consecration as "uncanonical" and calls Bishop Victor Leu a "pseudo-bishop." Of course, Fr. Constantin held these opinions because he was a member of the Ecumenical Patriarchate, whereas Bishop Victor Leu was consecrated by Metropolitan Seraphim Lade and Archbishop Stephan Sevbo, who were not recognized by the Ecumenical Patriarchate.

"This evidence provided in the biography and personal archive of Fr. Constantine Moraitakis (including the letter of Bishop Victor Leu to Fr. Constantine, and the written accounts of Fr. Constantine himself about Bishop Victor Leu and the consecration certificate he had been presented with to translate) clears up all of the speculations about the consecration. For instance, now we know the consecration DID actually take place. Now we know that the consecration took place by TWO bishops (Seraphim and Stephan) and that there was not a third bishop. This makes perfect sense now, since the third bishop that the Communist archives cited as having taken part (Bishop Philip von Gardner) had already been defrocked from the episcopate three years prior to Bishop Victor's consecration date. Now we know that a consecration certificate WAS actually issued, and that it was printed in three languages (Russian, Romanian and German) and that Bishop Victor Leu was seeking for Fr. Constantine to also make a Greek translation. Now we know that consecration date is also true too, because it is in December 1949, and Fr. Constantine Moraitakis's diary claims that he met with Bishop Victor Leu in Constantinople in 1950. So everything falls in place, there are no discrepencies. The fact the original consecration certificate was lost is because it was confiscated and burned by the Communists when Bishop Victor Leu was arrested." (personal communication, June 17, 2010).

Nifon Dobrogeanul and Mina were his followers, and Bishop Victor now ordained Niphon to the episcopate single-handedly. Later Niphon, also single-handedly, but with the agreement of Bishop Victor, consecrated Clement and Cassian. Victor's activity was confined to his flat in Bucharest because the communists placed him under virtual house arrest in order to restrict his contact with the faithful. That is why, when he died in 1978, he was taken to Cernica monastery and buried by the new calendarists there. Only a few laymen from his flock, and no priests, were present.

On April 19 / May 2, 2008 Metropolitans Cassian of Moldavia and Gerontius of Vrancea officially entered into communion with Metropolitan Cyricus of Mesogaia and Lavriotiki, a rebel from the Greek Matthewite jurisdiction, in a joint celebration in Romania. In a joint statement, all the other Greek Old Calendarists were condemned, and the union between ROCOR and the Greek Old Calendarists in 1971 declared to be a Masonic plot. And in an apologia reproduced in English on the "Kyrikite" website the "Kyrikites" declared: "According to the writings of St. Theodore the Studite, whose canon is quoted in the Synodal Decision, the bishops of the Romanian Catacomb Church were accepted based on their Confession of Faith, and their Apostolic Succession **was sealed by the Act itself**, which Metropolitan Kirykos read out aloud during the Divine Liturgy, just prior to entering into communion with them. The Decision states "By this act we RECOGNIZE, SEAL AND APPROVE your Apostolic Succession, **asking the Holy Spirit to fill anything that may be lacking, and known only to God**." The last phrase in bold is an exact quotation from the prayer for ordination of bishops. So Metropolitan Kyrikos appears to have tried to *reordain* the Romanian bishops – evidently without their knowledge.[23]

[23] http://genuineorthodoxchurch.com/apologia_Met_Kirikos.html. The Greek text of this "apologia", as reproduced here: http://www.churchgoc.org/pnoi/181/1.html does *not* contain the phrase from the prayer of ordination.

## *THE FALL OF THE SERBIAN CHURCH*

From the time of the election of Patriarch German in 1958, and with the exception of a very few clergy, the communists were now in complete control of the Serbian Patriarchate.

Archimandrite Justin Popovich wrote on the catastrophic situation of the Church at this time: "The Church is being gradually destroyed from within and without, ideologically and organisationally. All means are being used: known and unknown, open and secret, the most subtle and the most crude… And all this is skilfully dissolved, but in fact it is the most deadly of poisons with a sugar coating… The most elementary and rudimentary logic demonstrates and proves: cooperation with open atheists, the cursed enemies of Christ and the Orthodox Church of Christ, is illogical and anti-logical. We ask those who seek such cooperation, or already cooperate, or – terrible thought! – compel others to cooperate, with the words of Christ: 'What communion can there be between righteousness and lawlessness? Or what is there in common between light and darkness? What agreement can there be between Christ and Belial?' (II Corinthians 6.14-15). Do you not hear the Christ-bearing Apostle, who thunders: 'If we, or an angel from heaven begins to preach to you that which we have not preached to you, let him be anathema!' (Galatians 1.8). Or have you, in the frenzy of the atheist dictatorship, gone completely deaf to the Divine truth and commandment of Christ: 'You cannot serve God and Mammon' (Matthew 6.24)?"[24]

The result of the subjection of the Serbian Church to the communists was predictable: "an alarming tendency on the part of the hierarchy of the 'Mother Church' to abandon true Orthodoxy and embrace heresy… the worst heresy that has ever assaulted the Orthodox Church – the heresy of 'ecumenism'."[25] In 1965 the Serbian Church entered the World Council of Churches. In September, 1966, two inter-Orthodox Commissions were established in Belgrade to negotiate with the Anglicans and the Old Catholics. In 1967 Patriarch German said to the Roman Catholic bishop of Mostar: "The times are such that our sister Churches have to lean on each other, to turn away from that which divided us and to concentrate on all that we have in common."[26] The next year he recognized Catholic marriages, and became

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[24] Popovich, in *Vestnik Germanskoj Eparkhii Russkoj Tserkvi za Granitsei (Herald of the German Diocese of the Russian Church Abroad)*, № 3, 1992, pp. 15, 16.

[25] *A Time to Choose*, op. cit., p. 43.

[26] Joachim Wertz has provided another possible motive for the Serbian Church's entry into the WCC. He considers that "the main 'practical' reason why the Serbian Orthodox Church joined the WCC was that that body would provide the Serbian Church with visibility in the West and thus forestall any liquidation of the Church by Tito. Also the WCC would contribute to the rebuilding of many of the churches destroyed by the Croatian Ustasha in WWII. The rebuilding of these Churches was very high on the agenda of the Serbian Church. The Croatians wanted to erase the presence of Orthodoxy. The Serbian Church felt it imperative to bring back that presence and VISIBILITY. Similarly the WCC, and individual Western protestant Churches contributed to the building of the new Theological Faculty in the Karaburma section of Belgrade. This can be viewed as a posthumous slap in the face of Tito, who forbade the construction of any church in that neighborhood. He wanted it to be an ideal

one of the presidents of the WCC. In 1985, at a nuns' conference, he welcomed two Catholic bishops "with special honour" into the sanctuary, and then all the conference members (Orthodox, Catholics and Protestants) recited the Creed together in the Liturgy.[27] In 1971 he signed the following WCC statement in Geneva: "The powerful Breath of renewal will blow into the mighty arena of the Church, as well as into each of her communities; for these are not simple administrative units, but they all constitute a part of the one great Christian Church."

Patriarch German liked to justify his ecumenism by quoting the Serbian proverb: Drvo se na drvo naslanja; a covek na coveka – "Tree leans on tree and man on man." But the Free Serbs had an answer to this. "We can also quote the proverbs of our people: S'kim si, onaki si. – 'You are like those with whom you associate.' If you find your fellowship with heretics, you begin to share their erroneous thinking and eventually become a heretic. As an American proverb goes: 'Birds of a feather flock together.'"[28]

Commenting on the decision of the Orthodox Churches to become "organic members" of the WCC, Fr. Justin wrote: "Every true Orthodox Christian, who is instructed under the guidance of the Holy Fathers, is overcome with shame when he reads that the Orthodox members of the Fifth Pan-Orthodox Conference in Geneva [in June, 1968]… on the question of the participation of the Orthodox in the work of the World Council of Churches, considered it necessary 'to declare that the Orthodox Church considers itself to be an organic part of the World Council of Churches.'

"This assertion is apocalyptically horrifying in its un-orthodoxy and anti-orthodoxy. Was it necessary for the Orthodox Church, that most holy Body of the God-Man Christ, to become so debased to such a pitiful degree that its theological representatives – some of whom were Serbian bishops – have begun to beg for 'organic' participation and membership in the World Council of Churches, which will supposedly become a new 'Body' and a new 'Church', which will stand above all other churches, in which the Orthodox Churches and the non-orthodox churches will appear only as parts. God forbid! Never before has there been such a betrayal and abandonment of our holy Faith!

"We are renouncing the Orthodox Faith of the God-Man Christ, and organic ties with the God-Man and His Most Holy Body: we are repudiating the Orthodox Church of the holy apostles, the Fathers, and the Ecumenical Councils – and we wish to become 'organic members' of a heretical, humanistic, humanized and man-worshipping club, which consists of 263 heresies – every one of which is a spiritual death.

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progressive, socialist community of ugly high rise apartments with no trace of the Church." ("Re: [orthodox-synod] Strange letter", orthodox-synod@yahoogroups.com, 26 February, 2003).

[27] John Chaplain, "[paradosis] Re: Serbian Church – another item", orthodox-tradition@yahoogroups.com, 26 May, 2004.

[28] *A Time to Choose*, op. cit., p. 47.

"As Orthodox Christians we are 'members of Christ.' 'Shall I therefore take the members of Christ and make them members of a prostitute?' (I Corinthians 6.15). We are doing this by our organic union with the World Council of Churches, which is nothing other than the rebirth of atheistic man, of pagan idolatry.

"The time has finally come for the patristic Orthodox Church of Saint Sabbas, the Church of the holy apostles and Fathers, of the holy confessors, martyrs and new-martyrs, to stop mingling ecclesiastically and hierarchically with the so-called 'World Council of Churches', and to cast off forever any participation in joint prayer or services, and to renounce general participation in any ecclesiastical dealings whatsoever, which are not self-contained and do not express the unique and unchangeable character of the One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church – the Orthodox Church – the only true Church that has ever existed."[29]

ROCOR's attitude towards the Serbian Church now began to change. Thus on September 14/27, 1967, Archbishop Averky of Jordanville wrote to Metropolitan Philaret: "With regard to the question of the Serbian Church, whose Patriarch German is a stooge of the communist Tito, as the Serbs themselves are convinced, calling him 'the red patriarch'. We have heard this from many clergy and laity who have fled from Serbia. How can we recognize, and have communion in prayer with, 'the red patriarch', who maintains the closest friendly relations with red Moscow? Cannot our Hierarchical Council make *erroneous* decisions? Do we in the Orthodox Church have a doctrine about the *infallibility of every Council of Bishops*?"

Archbishop Averky's attitude to the Serbs was confirmed by the ROCOR Council of Bishops in 1967, which resolved to annul the resolution of the Council of Bishops in 1964 on the preservation of prayerful communion with the hierarchy of the Serbian Orthodox Church.[30] Early in 1970, Metropolitan Philaret of New York announced to the members of the ROCOR Synod that since the Serbian Patriarch German had chosen to serve as Chairman of the World Council of Churches, ROCOR should avoid joint prayer and service with him, while at the same time not making a major demonstration of the fact.[31]

Nevertheless, communion with the Serbs continued. For many hierarchs and priests of ROCOR had been brought up in Serbia, and out of gratitude felt that the Serbs should not be condemned or excommunicated. To what extent this attitude

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[29] *A Time to Choose*, op. cit., p. 53.

[30] Psarev, op. cit., p. 4. Bishop Agathangelus of Odessa writes: "Already on May 19 / June 1, 1967 the following resolution marked "Top Secret" was accepted by our Hierarchical Council in connection with [the Serbian Church's] ecumenical activity: 'In addition to the resolution of the present Council of Bishops on relations with the Serbian Orthodox church, the suggestion of his Eminence the First Hierarch and President of the Council of Bishops Metropolitan Philaret has been accepted and confirmed, that all the Reverend Bishops of the Russian Orthodox Church Abroad should refrain from concelebration with the hierarchy of the Serbian Orthodox Church.' As far as I know, this resolution has never been repealed in a council." (August 21, 2007, http://guest-2.livejournal.com/294723.html).

[31] Psarev, op. cit., p. 4.

was truly motivated by gratitude, and to what extent simply by fear of ROCOR's losing its last friends in "World Orthodoxy", is a moot point. In any case, it was contrary to the canons of the Church, which require the breaking of communion with all those in communion with heresy. Such an act would have been truly loving, for true love for the Serbs dictated that it should be pointed out into what an abyss their ecumenism was leading them, an exhortation which would have acquired greater weight by a full break in communion…

## *THE FREE SERBIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH*

Did any of the Serbs break from the now definitely heretical patriarchate? Inside Serbia, nobody broke completely, although in 1971 Archimandrite Justin broke off relations with the Serbian patriarch, while retaining contacts with the other bishops.[32] In the Serbian emigration, there was a bigger rebellion in 1963, when Germanus and his Synod decided to divide the diocese of Bishop Dionysius of America and Canada into three. Claiming to see in this a communist plot, Dionysius refused to accept the decision, announced that he was making his diocese autonomous and broke communion with the patriarch and his synod. On March 27, 1964 the Serbian Synod defrocked Dionysius. Then three pro-Belgrade priests were ordained bishops -in his place. Dionysius and his supporters refused to recognize these acts, for which the patriarchate condemned them as graceless schismatics.

However, this rebellion was not all that it seemed. Fr. Joseph of Avila writes: "In 1963 the American-Canadian diocese left the patriarchate of Belgrade. The American-Canadian diocese headed by Bishop Dionisije (Milivojevič) belonged to the Serbian Church in the United States. Besides Bishop Dionisije, since 1946 in the US there lived the Serbian Bishop Nikolai Velimirovič. Several years after the war, he was active in events in the Serbian emigration in the USA, he was rector of the theological school at Libertyville, and associate lecturer at the Academy of St. Vladimir and at the theological school in Holy Trinity monastery in Jordanville. In the 50s Bishop Nikolai withdrew from public life and he started living in the Russian monastery of St. Tikhon in Pennsylvania, where in the monastery theological school he lectured Pastoral and Dogmatic Theology and Homiletics, and later in 1955 he became rector of the theological school.

"Several Serbs at that time went to the Russian Church Abroad, among them former judge of the church court of the diocese of Žiča Jovan Saračevič. Under the name of Savva he was made a monk by Archbishop Leonty of Chile, was ordained as hieromonk in Argentina and later was chosen as a bishop of ROCOR in Edmonton, Canada.

"At the beginning of the 1950s, because of the bad situation in the Serbian Church, Michael Tošovič joined the Russian Church Abroad. He was one of the important people in Serbian True Orthodoxy. In the year 1952 he was chosen as teacher and lecturer of the Holy Bible and Greek language in the Russian seminary of Holy Trinity in Jordanville. In Jordanville he became a monk with the name Arsenije. Later he became a hieromonk and after that an archimandrite. In the middle of the 50s, with the blessing of Metropolitan Anastassy, he began to published the theological journal, *Srpski misionar*, in which he revealed the falling away of the Serbian Church, the Moscow Patriarchate and World Orthodoxy. Fr. Arsenije tried to convince the Serbs that since the Serbian patriarchate was enslaved by the

[32] *Orthodoxos Typos (Orthodox Press)*, № 144, June 15, 1971, page 4 (G); Hieromonk Sabbas of Dečani, personal communication. When Fr. Justin died on March 25, 1979, the patriarch did not attend his funeral…

communists, it was necessary to separate from the patriarchate and was in favour of founding a Serbian Church Abroad like the Russian Church Abroad.[33] Bishop Nikolai Velimirovič supported this idea of Fr. Arsenije, but in 1956 he reposed. Bishop Nikolai died under very suspicious circumstances, and there is very serious supposition that he was killed.

"In 1963 the American-Canadian diocese with Bishop Dionisije left the Serbian patriarchate. The direct cause for the split was Bishop Dionisije's suspension in May, 1963 because of moral and disciplinary transgressions. Dionisije claimed that he was suspended because he was anti-communist and that all the accusations were made up by the communist authorities, who were aiming to remove him and enslave the Serbian Church in the States using bishops loyal to the communists.

"In August, 1963 the clergy-laity assembly of the American-Canadian diocese refused obedience to the Serbian patriarchate. The followers of Dionisije claimed that the guilt of their bishop was invented, and they themselves brought up several accusations against the patriarchate, such as accepting Patriarch German from the communist authorities and his submission to those authorities, the foundation of the Macedonian Orthodox Church, the splitting of the American-Canadian diocese into three parts and the enthroning of three new bishops, all at the orders of the communists, as well as the accusations that the new bishops were loyal to the communists, etc.

"Although most of the accusations against the patriarchate were well-founded, and for that reason Dionisije had more than enough reasons to separate, many facts indicate that his sincerity was questionable.

"In 1963 Djoko Slijepčevič, a Church historian with an anti-communist orientation, but at the same time the follower of Patriarch German, wrote: 'Dionisije is trying to defend himself by his anti-communism, which was quite problematic for a long time, and later nothing else but a pile of empty phrases. What is really anti-communist about Bishop Dionisije?' On June 28, 1962, *Srpska Borba*, Bishop Dionisije's main ally and defender today, stated several of his 'anti-communist' slips. These are: in his article on November 7, 1957 but published in *Amerikansky Srbobran* on January 16, 1959, Bishop Dionisije was telling the chetniks about Karl Marx's example of unity. The newspaper *Srpska Borba* explains: 'Maybe there is some logic in this act of Bishop Dionisije, because even the manner in which he led the action for a 'Serbian gathering' and the ideas that he disclosed in his article on the foundation of the Association of Ravnogortsy, really are much closer to Karl Marx and his proletarians than to the holy things and interests of the Serbian nation and Serbian Orthodox Church.

"'It could be said that in this case Bishop Dionisije was a victim of confusion both in a logical and an ideological sense: he was confused, but later 'he gained his

[33] Hieromonk Arsenije, "Slobodnim Srbima – slobodna i normalizovana Tsrkva", *Srpski misionar,* N 19, 1964.

eyesight and found the right way'. The facts tell a completely different story: Bishop Dionisije sent his regards to Stalin, praised and glorified Tito and his People's Liberation Army, and of course was for a long time on the payroll of Tito's embassy in New York.

"'*Glas Kanadskikh Srba* twice, on July 25 and September 12, 1963, openly stated that Bishop Dionisije "in the autumn of 1944 through Dr. Šubšič greeted Marshal Tito and his courageous People's Liberation Army in a telegram. He was on the payroll of the Yugoslav communist embassy in Washington until the leaders of Serb nationality in the US promised that they would give him financial support. He was the only one of the Serbian bishops who, on October 23, 1958, delightedly greeted the foundation of the Macedonian Orthodox Church as 'a grand act and very useful for our Church" (*Glas Kanadskikh Srba*, September 12, 1963).

"'In the same article in which he revealed this opinion, and which is entitled 'His Holiness Kir German, the fifth patriarch of the renewed patriarchate of Peč' (*Glas Kanadskikh Srba*, October 23, 1958) Bishop Dionisije had this to say in trying to praise the new patriarch: 'The first great act of the new patriarch, which is perhaps of ultimate importance for the whole of the Serbian Orthodox Church, was the satisfactory solution of the question of the so-called Macedonian Church'. At that time, Bishop Dionisije had not the slightest doubt as regards the regularity of the election of Patriarch German, because he wrote this as well: 'And so the Holy Spirit and the electoral council of the Serbian Orthodox Church has decided that on the throne of the Serbian patriarchs should come Bishop German of Žiča, indisputably a very capable and gifted man, active and full of every virtue' (*Glas Kanadskikh Srba*, October 23, 1958).'[34]

"Slobodan Draškovič, who in 1963 was one of the main followers of Dionisije and played a major role in the National Church Council of the American-Canadian diocese at which this diocese decided to disobey the patriarch, wrote in 1967: 'There is no need to talk a lot about Bishop Dionisije. His policy, not only until May, 1963, but later as well, was marked by a policy of co-existence with the hierarchy of the enslaved and enchained Orthodox Church in Yugoslavia, in contrast with the very clear and strong decisions of the National Church Council. On March 1966, after almost four years of struggle against the Joseph Broz's Patriarch German, he complained against German to the notorious Soviet agent, the 'Russian Patriarch' Alexis, and sought justice from him.'[35]

"The fact that Dionisije split from the Church only for personal reasons is shown by the fact that he several times stated he was against any split from the Mother Church - until he was suspended and understood that he would be condemned.

[34] Slijepčevič, "Ogreshena vladike Dionisija", *Iskra*, Munich, 1963, pp. 13-14 (S).
[35] Draškovič, "Kojim putem? Poruka mladom srpskom narashtaju koji Broz nije uspeo da prevaspita", Chicago, 1967, p. 60 (S).

"Besides this, it was not only the anti-communism of Bishop Dionisije that was problematic. In 1957 the American-Canadian diocese of the Serbian Orthodox Church headed by Bishop Dionisije became a member of the heretical church organization, the National Church Council of America. Dionisije did not stop at that, but already then (in the 50s) he started to practise the most extreme ecumenism.

"In *Orthodox Russia* (no. 17, 1959) the following note was printed: 'On Sunday, 15/28 August in Buffalo (Lakavana) there took place the consecration of the newly built Serbian church of St. Stefan. The all-night vigil was served by the parish priest Miodrag Djurič, accompanied by two Serbian priests and one Anglican priest. In the morning the triumphant reception of Bishop Dionisije and Anglican Bishop Scafe took place. 15 priests were serving, among them Serbs, Anglicans, Belorussians, Ukrainian samosviaty and Ukrainians under Archbishop Palladius. Besides Bishop Dionisije, as the oldest hierarch, Bishop Scafe also took part in the service. He made some exclamations in the service, kissed Bishop Dionisije, and they said: 'Christ is among us, He is and will be'. He communed together with Dionisije in the Holy Gifts, and after that Bishop Dionisije gave communion to all the serving priests. At the banquet Bishop Scafe spoke of his admiration for Orthodoxy and how happy he was that America was having a chance to see beautiful Orthodox services on its land. He stated that in accordance with his abilities he was making a donation of $2500.

"'… Just before the consecration of the church Bishop Scafe called Bishop Dionisije and the local priest of Lacavan to his side and showed them that the Episcopalians had sent $75,000 to our church in Yugoslavia. At this point Bishop Scafe showed pictures of those in the Orthodox world with whom he had communed before: the patriarchs of Jerusalem and Constantinople, as well as our Vikentije. As he was going to commune with Bishop Dionisije the next day, at the banquet he gave a gift of $2500 for the church in Lacavan.'[36]

"Concerning the Church situation among the Serbs abroad, Fr. Arsenije Tosovich wrote in 1964: 'Bishop Dionisije recently for the first time referred positively to *Misionar* for its writing about separating from the enslaved patriarchate in Yugoslavia and for the letter Bishop Nikolai.' And then he condemned Hieromonk Arsenije as the one who was 'for the separation from the patriarchate'. And it was only when he was suspended and it was clear that he would be condemned, that he reminded us that the Church in Yugoslavia was not free and that he was being persecuted not only because he was guilty but because the communists wanted it. To tell the truth, nobody did more for the communists and for dissolving the Serbs in America than that same great Serb and great anti-communist Dionisije. If Tito was looking all over the world for a man for this job, he could not find a better one than this Dionisije, even if we don't mention his blessing telegrams on the occasion of the liberation of Belgrade 'to the father of the people, Stalin'….

"… And so if Bishop Dionisije was wrong, it doesn't mean that the patriarchate was right and that the Serbian Church in Yugoslavia was free and that we should

[36] *Srpski misionar*, NN 9-10, 1959.

unconditionally submit to its decisions. On the contrary. Everything was said about that in the above-mentioned article of 1954, including the fact, for example, that all candidates for the hierarchy had to be approved by the communist central committee. The central committee of course would approve only of those candidates who were theirs or at least did not have any dispute with them. We, who are free, and who don't want to put our necks under the communist yoke, cannot and should not accept in any way the communist choice of hierarchs. That would mean those candidates first have to receive Satan's blessing and seal, and then be consecrated as hierarchs!…

"So far the American diocese and the whole emigration has had one unsuccessful bishop, Dionisije Milivojevich, and now there are five of them: three sparrows and two Dionisijes. Stefan, Firmilian and Grigorije, because of their dependence on the enslaved patriarchate, and his dependence on the communist godless authorities, will be obliged, whether willingly or not, 'to fly over the sea', keep in touch with the patriarch, and through him with the religious commission and communist authorities…

"…. Since these three hierarchs are willingly going into communist enslavement, and thereby have to submit to the godless authorities, there arises the question of their grace and the question of our submission to them. Of course, the answer to both questions can be only no. 'For what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? And what communion hath light with darkness? And what concord hath Christ with Belial? Or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel?' (II Corinthians 6.14-15).

"We have two Dionisijes, that is, Dionisije Milivojevič and Irinej Kovačevič, who are both illegal and graceless. The first was condemned by the authority that enthroned him and which he constantly acknowledged. It is understandable that now he is trying to deny the right of that authority to condemn him, but that does not save him. Irinej Kovačevič was consecrated by Ukrainian samosvyaty, who themselves are not lawful and have no grace, so they could not give him what they themselves did not have. In his message for the Nativity of the Lord Dionisije has promised us more of these samosvyaty hierarchs. For this consecration Bishop Dionisije turned to the ROCOR and American Metropolia, but only the samosvyaty accepted.

"With regard to that subordination of the official church to the godless authorities, we should do as the Russians did in the same case. Will we found a Catacomb Church, as it was in Russia, which will not acknowledge the official Serbian Church and its capitulation before the godless authorities? We don't know. But we know what the emigration should do, it is the foundation of the Serbian Church Abroad. What Bishop Dionisije is doing now is nothing, since he is under suspension and he is guilty of many things and should have been defrocked long ago. For two decades he has been leading the American-Canadian diocese, and now we see her pitiful end. And the same thing would have happened with the Church

Abroad if he had been the leader. But will the Serbian emigration do something in this direction, or will it go on following the leader without a head? We cannot tell for sure. In any case, honourable and God-loving Serbian emigrants, who have God and faith in the Church in the first place in their lives, should remember that each hierarch who comes to freedom but out of submission of Patriarch German and in connection with the godless communist authorities and their representatives, is not a real hierarch and has no grace of God in him. In the same way, the suspended Bishop Dionisije and his samosvyat Irinej and all the others whom he may invent are not real and have no grace. To the Serbian God-loving emigration it is left that until the foundation of the Serbian Church Abroad the Serbian God-loving emigration should turn for their spiritual needs to the representatives of our sister Church, the Russian Church Abroad. She is the only one in the world that has remained faithful and undefiled as the Bride of Christ.'[37]"[38]

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[37] *Srpski Misionar,* N 19, 1964, pp. 3-9.

[38] Monk Joseph of Avila, Serbia, in Moss, *Letopis Velike Bitke,* op. cit., pp. 399-404. Joachim Wertz (private e-mail communication, 04/02/01) writes: "You ask me about my attitude toward the 'Free Serbs', by which I understand what has become the New Gracanica Metropolia. The schism has been overcome, but the healing continues. Therefore I am reluctant to speak on this matter (and also because I do not have first-hand experience of that tragic time). Nevertheless it is something that needs to be discussed, especially for the benefit of non-Serbian Orthodox. I have read on the matter, but much of what I know comes from others who were either involved in the issue or who were witnesses. Most of these people were very close to Vladika Nikolai [Velimirovich]. And I personally trust them. Complaints were made against Bishop Dionisije to the mother Church in Belgrade long before the events of 1963. He was accused of conduct unbecoming of a Bishop. People are willing to suggest financial misconduct, but certainly moral misconduct is implied (one of these areas where Serbs are not too open). Dionisije had successfully established for himself his own domain in North America 'from the Atlantic to the Pacific' that was untouchable. Perhaps much like Archbishop Iakovos did. No one doubts the sincerity of his anti-fascism or his anti-communism. During WWII he did much to publicize the plight of the Serbs. But he had his 'own little thing going' and no one could intrude. Problems began happening after the war when the Serbian émigrés, including Bishop Nikolai, started to arrive. Many of these émigrés, several of whom I know or knew personally, had various levels of theological education. Their services were not welcomed by Dionisije. Neither was Vladika Nikolai. He was treated rudely and often ignored. Dionisije perceived him as a threat, though Nikolai always deferred to him as the ruling Bishop. Eventually Vladika Nikolai accepted the offer of the rectorship of St. Tikhon's Seminary and virtually 'retired' from American Serbian Church life. In short, Dionisije was threatened by the potential for spiritual and ecclesiastical 'revival' that came with the émigrés. (Please bear in mind that Vladika Nikolai, while in exile, was still the ruling bishop of the diocese of Zhicha. He remained such until his repose. He could not have been a canonical threat to the bishop of another diocese). In a remarkable example of bad timing, the complaints to the Patriarchate against Bishop Dionisije reached a crescendo at the very time Dionisije was most vocally anti-communist. Pressure on the Patriarchate to remove him came from two sources: his own flock and the Tito regime. Several bishops were sent to investigate him and they were treated not in a dignified manner. Dionisije refused to cooperate. There was no choice but to remove him. (Note this happened in 1963, Bishop Nikolai having died in 1956). Dionisije wrapped himself in anti-communism to conceal other matters. This is my understanding and opinion. Left on his own, at one point he even applied to be accepted by the Moscow Patriarchate! He was refused, as he was by the Synod Abroad. To create a hierarchy, he resorted to uncanonical Ukrainian bishops. Fortunately his successor, Bishop Irinej (Kovachevich), later Metropolitan of the New Gračanica Metropolia, was a much more Church centered man. Later when the diocese became 'the Free Serbian Church' and he had contacts with the Greek Old Calendarists (at that time it was with Paisios of Astoria and whatever Synod he was part of), and also with the anti-ecumenist Patriarch of Alexandria Nicholas VI (under whose jurisdiction he was for a brief time), he and some of the clergy became more

Cast out in this way, three dioceses and about forty parishes of the Free Serbs, as they now called themselves, applied to join ROCOR. Two archbishops – Averky of Jordanville and John (Maximovich) of San Francisco - supported them. However, other bishops, including Archbishop Vitaly of Canada, were opposed, and the Free Serbs' petition was rejected. The quarrel was so heated that two Russians were excommunicated.[39] After being rejected by ROCOR, the Free Serbs then briefly came into communion first with two Ukrainian bishops of the Polish Orthodox Church and then with the Patriarchate of Alexandria. Fleeing the Ecumenism of the latter, they briefly found refuge with the "Florinite" Greek Old Calendarists led by Archbishop Auxentius, on September 11/24, 1981.[40]

Whatever their canonical status, the Free Serbs did oppose ecumenism – until their reabsorption into the patriarchate in 1991. Moreover, not all the Free Serbs joined the patriarchate, and some parishes remain independent to this day.

Moreover, there were some anti-ecumenists in the patriarchate. Thus in November, 1994 Bishop Artemije of Raska and Prizren, in a memorandum to the Serbian Synod, said that ecumenism was an ecclesiological heresy, and that the Serbs should withdraw from the WCC.[41]

More recently, he has written: "The result of this participation [of the Serbs in the WCC] was reflected in certain material aid which the Serbian Orthodox Church periodically received from the WCC in the form of medicine, medical care and rehabilitation of some individuals in Switzerland, student scholarships, and financial donations for certain concrete purposes and needs of the SOC, such as the construction of a new building by the Theological School. We paid for these crumbs of material assistance by losing, on the spiritual plane, the purity of our faith, canonical consistency and faithfulness to the Holy Tradition of the Orthodox Church. The presence of our representatives (and Orthodox representatives in general) at various and sundry ecumenical gatherings has no canonical justification. We did not go there in order to boldly, openly and unwaveringly confess the eternal and unchangeable Truth of the Orthodox Faith and Church, but in order to make compromises and to agree more or less to all those decisions and formulations offered to us by the non-Orthodox. That is how we ultimately arrived at Balamand,

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traditionalist (although I can't say how well this trickled down). It does seem that Metropolitan Irinej did leave a traditionalist legacy. As I said above, the schism is over, but is still healing. All of the antagonism now revolves around property claims and money. I should point out that I believe it is true that Fr. Justin Popovich truly believed that Bishop Dionisije was being persecuted because of his anti-communism. I feel he only knew, or was willing to believe, only one aspect of the story."

[39] Joseph Legrande, "Re: [paradosis] July 2001 Sobor", orthodox-tradition@yahoogroups.com, September 16, 2002.

[40] "The arrangements were made by Bp. Paisius of Astoria acting as Auxentius' representative… The decision is signed by Abp. Auxentius, Metr. Paisius of North and South America and Metr. Euthymius of Thessalonica" (George Lardas, "The Old Calendar Movement in the Greek Church", Holy Trinity Monastery, Jurdanville, 1983 (unpublished thesis), p. 22).

[41] *Orthodox Tradition*, vol. XIII, № 2, 1996, p. 3.

Chambésy and Assisi, which taken as a whole represent infidelity and betrayal of the Holy Orthodox Faith."[42]

Logically, in order to make his actions conform with his words, Bishop Artemije should have left the Serbian Synod. Nevertheless, his words remain true, and constitute a clear condemnation of the position of the Serbian Church since its entry into the WCC in the 1960s. At the present time, Bishop Artemije is in schism from the official Serbian patriarchate, but not for reasons of ecumenism; and he claims to be still in communion with the rest of World Orthodoxy…

[42] Bishop Artemije, Statement to the Thessalonica Theological Conference, September, 2004; in *The Shepherd*, June, 2005, p. 11.

## *THE FALL OF THE BULGARIAN CHURCH*

In 1968 the Bulgarian Church adopted the new calendar. The change was imposed, according to one account, at the insistence of the WCC, which in 1965-66 had sent letters on the subject to the churches; but according to another account – on orders from the Moscow Patriarchate, which wished to see how the people reacted to the change in Bulgaria before proceeding with the same innovation in Russia.[43] In the event, only the Russian Women's Monastery of the Protecting Veil in Sophia refused to accept the change.

Bishop Photius of Triaditza writes: "For some months before the introduction of the reform, *Tserkoven Vestnik* informed the astonished believing people that the reform was being carried out 'in accordance with the ecumenist striving of the Bulgarian Orthodox Church…' The Bulgarian clergy and even episcopate were completely unprepared to resist the calendar innovation, while the people, suspecting something amiss, began to grumble. The calendar reform was introduced skilfully and with lightning suddenness by Patriarch Cyril – an ardent modernist and 'heartfelt' friend of the Ecumenical Patriarch Athenagoras! Everyone knew that the patriarch was on good terms with the communist authorities (for his 'services' to it he received the title of 'academic' – member of the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences!) Everyone also knew of his despotic temperament: he did all he could to persecute and annihilate his ideological opponents."[44]

In fact, the Bulgarian Church's change to the new calendar had been dictated by the Russian communists, who wanted to introduce the innovation into the Russian Church, too, but wanted to "test the waters" by trying it out on the Bulgarians first.[45] But when the only Orthodox in Bulgaria who rejected the innovation turned out to be the *Russian* women's monastery at Knyazhevo, Sophia, the Russians decided to hold back from introducing it in Russia…

However, while deciding not to adopt the new calendar, the MP had already, in 1967, declared: "Bearing in mind the practice of the Ancient Church, when East and West (Rome and the Asian bishops) celebrated Pascha at different times, while preserving complete communion in prayer between themselves, and taking into account the experience of the Orthodox Church of Finland and our parishes in Holland, as also the exceptional position of the parishioners of the church of the Resurrection of Christ amidst the heterodox world, [it has been resolved] to allow

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[43] *Eastern Churches Review*, vol. II, № 3, Spring, 1969, p. 335.

[44] *Pravoslavnaia Rus' (Orthodox Russia)*, № 21 (1522), November 1/14, 1994, pp. 8, 9.

[45] Archimandrite Porphyrius of Sofia, personal communication, February, 1981. This was confirmed by the HOCNA Bishop Sergius, who writes: "In 1971 Metropolitan Nikodim of Leningrad visited Alaska in order to venerate the relics of St. Herman. In an effort to distance itself from the MP, the then-new OCA had not invited the MP hierarchs to participate in the August, 1970 canonization of that Saint. Metropolitan Nikodim (and his OCA guide, Father Kyril Fotiev) spent 5 days in Sitka en route to Kodiak and I was the local host. During several long conversations, Metropolitan Nikodim mentioned that he was intent on adopting the civil calendar for the MP, and as a test case, had brought about Bulgaria's switch from the patristic to the civil calendar."

Orthodox parishioners of the Moscow Patriarchate living in Switzerland to celebrate the immovable feast and the feasts of the Paschal cycle according to the new style."[46]

In 1964, some parishes of the Bulgarian patriarchate in the USA petitioned ROCOR to ordain their leader, Archimandrite Cyril (Ionchev), to the episcopate. The petition was granted, and in August Metropolitan Philaret and four other bishops ordained him. However, in 1968 the Bulgarian patriarchate adopted the new calendar, and soon the Bulgarian parishes began to agitate that they be allowed to use the new calendar. In 1971 Bishop Cyril gave a report on this subject to the Hierarchical Council in Montreal, and in 1972 he and his parishes joined the American Metropolia with the permission of ROCOR.[47]

[46] *Zhurnal Moskovskoj Patriarkhii* (Journal of the Moscow Patriarchate), 1967, № 8, p. 1; Monk Benjamin, op. cit., part 5, p. 36.
[47] *Pravoslavnaia Rus'*, № 16 (1829), August 15/28, 2007, pp. 14-15.

## *"THE HERESY OF HERESIES"*

In the second half of the 1960s opposition to Ecumenism the Local Orthodox Churches was gradually suppressed. Some conservative hierarchs died, such as Patriarch Christopher of Alexandria (in 1967); others were more forcibly removed or replaced, such as Archbishop Chrysostom of Athens and the leaders of some of the Athonite monasteries. Others were effectively silenced by bribery, such as the Orthodox Church of America. The Greek State Church was worn down by a mixture of bribes and political arm-twisting. The bribes came from the Vatican in the form of the return of the relics of Saints Andrew, Titus and Isidore to the Greek Church (and of St. Sabbas to the Jerusalem Patriarchate). The Greeks found it difficult on the one hand to give thanks for the return of these relics, and on the other hand to put up a firm resistance to the lifting of the anathemas against Rome.

Another clever move on the part of the Vatican was to allow 3000 Catholics in Corfu and on the Ionian islands to celebrate Pascha in 1967 on 30 April, the Orthodox date. As the journal *Ekklesia* pointed out: "The decision evokes natural suspicion that fundamentally this is a propaganda move and an attempt to proselytize the Orthodox population of Corfu."[48] As full union beckoned, it became less important to the papists on which day they and the Orthodox celebrated the feasts as long as it was the same day.

There is other evidence that the Pope was attempting to force the pace in this year. Thus in May the Catholic Ecumenical Directory was published, which allowed Catholics to take communion in Orthodox churches if they were isolated or could not receive Catholic sacraments for a long period. And yet in March Patriarch Athenagoras had said that Orthodox could not (yet) receive "sacramental grace from a priest who is not himself Orthodox". Then in July the Pope travelled to Constantinople, where he prayed together with the Patriarch. This visit was returned in October, when Athenagoras visited Rome, and the two prelates sat on equal and identical thrones – "an event which must be unprecedented in the annals of papal Rome, and for which there was certainly no parallel at the Council of Florence in 1438-9."[49]

This exchange of visits was made easier by the fact that on April 21 a military coup had taken place in Greece. On May 10 the newly established government promulgated a "compulsory law" which dismissed the Synod, replaced it by a Synod chosen by the government, retired Archbishop Chrysostom as being too old, and replaced him with Archimandrite Jerome, who had been a member of the central committee of the World Council of Churches since 1954. This act was very reminiscent of the way in which the revolutionary government chose Chrysostom Papadopoulos in 1922 and must be presumed to have had the same aim – the replacement of the existing incumbent by one more closely identified with the West and Ecumenism.

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[48] *Eastern Churches Review*, vol. I, № 3, Spring, 1967, p. 291.
[49] *Eastern Churches Review*, vol. I, № 4, Winter, 1967-68, p. 419.

The new archbishop quickly showed his credentials by coming to "full agreement" with the Ecumenical Patriarchate and issuing the following statement in his enthronement address: "Our relations with non-Orthodox confessions must be marked by Christian love and by mutual respect, so as to foster friendship; but at the same time we must preserve our dignity and our firm adherence to the Orthodox faith and teaching. As a pre-condition for any closer relations, we must insist on the condemnation of proselytism."[50]

The only problem about this seemingly conservative statement was that "firm adherence to the Orthodox faith" and "the condemnation of proselytism" are incompatible, in that if we believe that the Orthodox Faith is the True Faith we are bound to hope and work for the conversion of people of other faiths.[51] We condemn proselytism among the Orthodox, not because it is "unfair" and goes against some kind of ecclesiastical non-aggression pact, but because it takes people away from the saving ark of the One True Church. By the same token we support Orthodox missionary work among the heterodox because it brings the heterodox to salvation, in fulfilment of the Saviour's words: "Go therefore and make disciples of all nations" (Matthew 28.19).[52]

Archbishop Jerome also introduced several innovations, as Fr. Basile Sakkas writes:

"(a) that the priests cut their hair and their beards and go about in civilian dress.

"(b) that the use of organs and mixed choirs singing in harmony be adopted in the churches, although this is in contradiction of the Tradition of the sacred music of our Church.

"(c) that Mattins be suppressed and two Liturgies be served instead 'in order to facilitate the faithful'. In this manner, anyone can enter in the middle of the first Liturgy and leave in the middle of the second, just like in the cinema. Hence, we adopt the practices and conceptions of the Latins.

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[50] *Eastern Churches Review*, vol. I, № 4, Winter, 1967-68, p. 425.

[51] As St. Anatolius the Younger of Optina (+1922) said: "My child, if you see some people of another faith quarrelling with an Orthodox and wanting by flattery to tear him away from the Orthodox Church, help the Orthodox. In this way you will deliver a sheep from the jaws of a lion. But if you are silent and leave him without help, this is the same as if you took a redeemed soul from Christ and sold him to Satan." "If somebody tells you: 'Both your and our faith is from God,' you, child, reply as follows: 'Corrupter of the faith! Or do you consider God also to be of two faiths! Haven't you heard what Scripture says: "There is one God, one Faith, one Baptism" (Ephesians 4.5).'… Amen."

[52] Archimandrite John Lewis of Holy Theotokos Monastery, North Fort Myers, Florida related to the present author how he had once visited Patriarch Athenagoras in August, 1967, when he was a subdeacon in the Ruthenian Byzantine Catholic Church but was seeking to convert to Holy Orthodoxy. Athenagoras discouraged him, saying that he must stay in the Uniate church and act as a "bridge" between Catholics and Orthodox!

"(d) that there be a change of the Paschalia (this is still being debated furiously). The proposal here is that the date of the celebration of Pasch be fixed so that it always occurs on the second Sunday of April.

"(e) that for 'archaeological' concerns, the iconostases in the churches be taken down.

"(f) that the sacrament of Holy Baptism be changed (read 'mutilated') little by little. Forget for a moment that the triple repetition of the Symbol of Faith has almost everywhere fallen into oblivion and instead of blessing the waters used for the baptism with the appropriate prayers, previously blessed holy water is simply added (as though the Fathers who prescribed that the Symbol of Faith be recited three times and that the waters be blessed directly knew nothing and we are therefore obliged to correct them). Moreover, the exorcisms are suppressed and the children are made to sit in the baptismal font and then water is poured upon their heads by the hands of the priest and thus there is no *immersion*…"[53]

There were other, more political reasons for the coup in the Church. Athenagoras was favoured by the Americans as being the man best able, on the one hand, to effect a rapprochement between Turkey and Greece, and, on the other, to resist the influence of the Soviet-dominated Moscow Patriarchate. So his opponents in the Greek Church had to be removed.[54]

But the majority of the monks on Mount Athos were still fiercely opposed to the lifting of the anathemas. Therefore in November, 1967, an exarchate consisting of three bishops of the newly constituted Greek Church was sent to Athos to try and reconcile the monks and bring those monasteries that had broken communion with the ecumenists back into obedience to the patriarchate. In this mission, however, they failed – for the time being.

In 1968 the Fourth General Assembly of the WCC took place in Uppsala. As we have seen, Patriarch German of Serbia was one of the six presidents, and remained in that post for the next ten years. Uppsala considerably furthered the ecumenical movement. The Orthodox, as the new general secretary Carson Blake joyfully pointed out, were now taking full part in all the sections and committees and not, as often in the past, issuing separate statements disagreeing with the majority Protestant view.

Now only ROCOR, the Russian Catacomb Church and the Greek and Romanian Old Calendarists stood in the way of the complete triumph of Ecumenism. It was time for this last remnant of the True Church of Christ to renounce all hesitations, all false hopes, all temptations to compromise in the face of the completely unambiguous apostasy of the official churches of "World Orthodoxy". It was time to

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[53] Sakkas, *The Calendar Question,* Jordanville, N.Y.: Holy Trinity Monastery, 1972, pp. 43-44.
[54] Fr. George Macris, *The Orthodox Church and the Ecumenical Movement*, Seattle: St. Nectarios Press, 1986, pp. 101-105.

declare that Ecumenism was not simply uncanonical, but heresy, and not simply heresy, but "the heresy of heresies".

This definition came in a report that Archbishop Vitaly (Ustinov) of Canada gave to the Synod of ROCOR on the Uppsala Assembly of the WCC: "At the opening of the Assembly an ecumenical prayer was read in the name of all those assembles: 'O God our Father, You can create everything anew. We entrust ourselves to You, help us to live for others, for Your love extends over all people, and to search for the Truth, which we have not known…' How could the Orthodox listen to these last words? It would have been interesting to look at that moment at the faces of the Orthodox hierarchs who had declared for all to hear that they, too, did not know the Truth. Every batyushka of ours in the remotest little village knows the Truth by experience, as he stands before the throne of God and prays to God in spirit and in truth. Even *The Journal of the Moscow Patriarchate*, which is completely subject to the censorship of the communist party, in citing the words of the prayer in its account of this conference, did not dare to translate the English 'truth' by the word 'istina', but translated it as 'pravda' ['righteousness']. Of course, everyone very well understood that in the given case the text of the prayer was speaking without the slightest ambiguity about the Truth. Perhaps the Orthodox hierarchs have resorted, in the conference, to the old Jesuit practice of reservatio mentalis, but in that case if all these delegates do not repent of the sin of communion in prayer with heretics, then we must consider them to be on the completely false path of apostasy from the Truth of Orthodoxy… Ecumenism is the heresy of heresies because until now each heresy in the history of the Church has striven to take the place of the true Church, but the ecumenical movement, in uniting all the heresies, invites all of them together to consider themselves the one true Church."[55]

On December 16, 1969, the MP Synod resolved to allow Catholics and Old Ritualists to receive communion from Orthodox priests if they ask for it.[56] The MP's Archbishop Basil of Brussels recalled: "It fell to me to defend the good name and Orthodoxy of the Russian Church at the Pan-Orthodox conferences (those like the Pan-Orthodox commission for dialogue with the Anglicans) with the following argumentation: 'This resolution of the Synod was elicited by a completely special situation of believers, and in particular of Catholics in the Soviet Union. Where there is not one Catholic church of priest for thousands of kilometres. Such a resolution was made by the Synod of Constantinople and Patriarch Joachim II in 1878 in relation to the Armenians. Theologically, it is difficult for me to justify such oekonomia, but I cannot judge the Russian hierarchs who live in contemporary Russia in difficult conditions. They know better than we what they are doing.' This argumentation satisfied everyone, even on Athos, but everything was destroyed by Metropolitan Nicodemus giving communion [to Catholic students] in Rome. 'What 'pastoral oikonomia" forced him to commune Catholics where there are so many Catholic churches?' they asked me. The only reply that I could give was: 'Your

[55] Vitaly, "Ekumenizm" (Ecumenism), *Pravoslavnij Vestnik (Orthodox Herald)*, June, 1969, pp. 14-30; *Moskva (Moscow)*, 1991, № 9, p. 149 ®.
[56] *Zhurnal Moskovskoj Patriarkhii* (Journal of the Moscow Patriarchate), 1970, № 1, p. 5 ®.

hierarchs even worse when they give to communion to everyone indiscriminately.' 'Our hierarchs, like Archbishop James of America or Athenagoras of London, are traitors to Orthodoxy, we have known that for a long time (replied to me Abbot George of the monastery of Grigoriou on Athos). But that the Moscow Patriarchate, the Russian Orthodox Church, which we respect for her firmness in Orthodoxy, should act in this way in the person of Metropolitan Nicodemus, shocks us and deeply saddens us.' I recounted this reaction to Metropolitan Nicodemus. He even became angry: 'It's not important what they say on Athos. Athos is not an Autocephalous Church.'"[57]

Neither side in this argument seemed to understand that the giving of communion to a heretic *in any circumstances* is harmful for that heretic so long as he remains in his heresy. More Orthodox, therefore, was the robust response of the ROCOR Synod, which on March 31, 1970 condemned the MP resolution as follows: "The decision of the Moscow Patriarchate to give access to Roman Catholics to all the sacraments of the Orthodox Church… both violates the sacred canons and is contrary to the dogmatic teaching of Orthodoxy. By entering into communion with the heterodox, the Moscow Patriarchate alienates itself from unity with the Holy Fathers and Teachers of the Church. By this action it does not sanctify the heretics to whom it gives sacraments, but itself becomes a partaker of their heresy." Archbishop Averky (Taushev) of Jordanville commented: "Now, even if some entertained some sort of doubts about how we should regard the contemporary Moscow Patriarchate, and whether we can consider it Orthodox after its intimate union with the enemies of God, the persecutors of the Faith and Christ's Church, these doubts must now be completely dismissed: by the very fact that it has entered into liturgical communion with the Papists, it has *fallen away from Orthodoxy* and can no longer be considered Orthodox."[58]

This stronger attitude to the MP was paralleled by a reiteration of the Russian Church's originally very uncompromising attitude towards the revolution. Thus on January 1, 1970 the ROCOR Synod confirmed Patriarch Tikhon's 1918 anathema against the Bolsheviks, adding one of its own against "Vladimir Lenin and the other persecutors of the Church of Christ, dishonourable apostates who have raised their hands against the Anointed of God, killing clergymen, trampling on holy things, destroying the churches of God, tormenting our brothers and defiling our Fatherland" [59]

It should be pointed out that at this time of rapprochement between the MP and the Vatican, the KGB had managed to penetrate the Vatican. As I.I. Maslova writes, in August, 1970, "the KGB informed the Central Committee that 'in the course of carrying out the given undertakings the agents of the organs of state security succeeded in making personal approaches to Pope Paul VI and his immediate

[57] Monk Benjamin, op. cit., part 5, p. 40.
[58] Averky, *Contemporary Life in the Light of the Word of God: Sermons and Speeches (1969-1973),* volume III, Jordanville, p. 216.
[59] http://catacomb.org.ua/modules.php?name=Pages&go=print_page&pid=1775.

entourage". "Useful influence" was exerted, and specially prepared materials were "put forward" in which the thought was emphasized that hostile actions on the part of the Vatican and its centres (especially in the emigration) against the USSR would complicate the position of believers and clergy in the country and, in particular, hinder the establishment of closer relations between the ROC and the Catholic Church."[60]

[60] Maslova, *Russkaia Pravoslavnaia Tserkov' i KGB (1960-1980-e gody)* (The Russian Orthodox Church and the KGB (1960s-1980s), in http://elmager.livejournal.com/217784.html.

## ***MOSCOW AND THE METROPOLIA***

On the very same day that ROCOR condemned the MP as "partaking in heresy", Metropolitan Irenaeus of All America and Canada and Metropolitan Nicodemus (Rotov) of Leningrad signed an Agreement giving autocephaly to the American Metropolia – a deal which was accepted by no other Autocephalous Orthodox Church. On April 2, a delegation of the Japanese Orthodox Church set off for Moscow, where on April 10 it received from Patriarch Alexis a *Tomos* of Autonomy. On the same day Archbishop Nicholas (Kasatkin) of Japan was canonised.[61] In this way, as part of the deal with the Metropolia, the Japanese Church, which formerly had been under the Metropolia, came under Moscow's jurisdiction. However, the MP's parishes in North America, which were supposed to come under the Metropolia – or the Orthodox Church of America, as it was now called – did not do so.

On June 24 Patriarch Athenagoras in a letter to Patriarch Alexis touched on two important questions: the authority competent to grant autocephaly, and the factors and conditions necessary for a correct proclamation of autocephaly. With regard to the first question he declared that 'the granting of it is within the competence of the whole Church.' But to a Local Church 'is proper only the right to receive the first petitions for independence from those concerned and to express whether the bases suggested for it are worthy of justification'. With regard to the second question, Patriarch Athenagoras expressed the opinion that in order to announce an ecclesiastical autocephaly that aims to satisfy purely ecclesiastical needs, the opinion of the clergy and laity, the judgement of the Mother Church and the expressed will of the whole Church is required. Considering that these conditions had not been fulfilled in the giving of autocephaly to the Orthodox Church in America, the patriarch called on the Russian Church to apply 'efforts to annul the canonical confusion that has been created'. Otherwise, he threatened to regard the action 'as if it had never taken place'.[62]

Of course, the patriarch had a point. But since his own patriarchate, by creating a whole series of unlawful autocephalies since the 1920s, was the first sinner in this respect, it is not surprising that his voice was not heeded…

Hieromonk Seraphim Rose wrote of the union of the Metropolia with Moscow: "The American Metropolia doubtless fell into this trap out of naiveté, and already its hierarchs are demonstrating that its so-called 'independence' conceals a subtle form of psychological dependence." Newspaper articles showing that Metropolitan clergy and bishops had begun to apologize, not only for the Soviet domination of the church organization, but even for the Soviet system itself. One priest "admits some Soviet bishops are Soviet agents, that the whole autocephaly follows political trends set forth by the Soviet government; Bishop ____ is quoted as saying that he found the Soviet people to be happy and well dressed, and if some complain about the

[61] Monk Benjamin, op. cit., part 5, p. 43.
[62] K.E. Skurat; Monk Benjamin, op. cit., part 5, p. 44.

Government, well, so do Americans." Elsewhere Fr. Seraphim quoted the same bishop as saying, "As Americans we have to reassess our ideas of life in the Soviet Union." Such statements, Fr. Seraphim wrote, "reveal the 'autocephaly' as an important tool for Moscow in politically 'neutralizing' public opinion in the West."

Asserting that it was far worse to capitulate to a nihilist state in freedom than under compulsion, Fr. Seraphim wrote to a priest of the Metropolia: "You will find in our midst great sympathy and pity for all but the leading hierarchs of Moscow – and even for some of them you will find fellow-feeling owing to the inhuman circumstances under which they have been forced to betray Orthodoxy… But this fellow-feeling cannot allow us who are free to… place ourselves in the same trap she [the MP] was *forced* into! And this the Metropolia has done… With every fiber of our being and every feeling of our soul we are repulsed by this *free* act of betrayal… Do you not grasp the immensity of your spiritual bondage?"

"Is 'stepping out onto the world Orthodox scene' really so important to the Metropolia that it must do it at the expense of the suffering Russian Orthodox faithful? To give one small example: Metropolitan Nicodemus is the Metropolia's great 'benefactor', and no one can doubt that his success with the Metropolia has strengthened his position with the Moscow Patriarchate. On the other hand, the layman Boris Talantov in the USSR has openly called Metropolitan Nicodemus a betrayer of the Church, a liar, and an agent of world anti-Christianity, for which statements (among others) he was imprisoned by the Soviets; Metropolitan Nicodemus tells the West that he was in prison for 'anti-governmental activities'. On January 4 of this year Boris Talantov died in prison, undoubtedly the victim of Metropolitan Nicodemus (among others). Can the Metropolia feel itself to be on the side of this confessor? I don't see how it can."[63]

In March, 1969, the Great Council of the Metropolia made a last Orthodox statement on Ecumenism before succumbing to it:- "The basic goal of the ecumenical movement… is the unity of all Christians in one single body of grace. And here the Orthodox Church firmly confesses that such a genuine unity is founded, above all, on the unity of faith, on the unanimous acceptance by all of the Holy Scriptures and the Holy Traditions as they are wholly and integrally preserved by the Church. Real love for brothers separated from us [sic – a misleading description of heretics, who are not our brothers in Christ] consists therefore not in silencing all that divides us, but in a courageous witness to the Truth, which alone can unite us all, and also in a common search for the ways to make that Truth evident to all. Only in this way did the Orthodox Church always understand her participation in the ecumenical movement…

"However, within the ecumenical movement there has always existed another understanding of unity. This other understanding seems to become more popular today. It recognizes virtually no importance at all in agreement in faith and doctrine, and is based on relativism, i.e., on the affirmation that the doctrinal or canonical

[63] Fr. Seraphim, in Hieromonk Damascene op. cit., pp. 400-401.

teachings of the Church, being 'relative', are not obligatory for all. Unity is viewed as already existing, and nothing remains to be done except to express it and strengthen it through ecumenical manifestations or services. Such an approach is totally incompatible with the Orthodox concept of the ecumenical movement.

"The differences between these two approaches is best illustrated by the attitudes towards concelebration and intercommunion among divided Christians. According to the Orthodox doctrine, the prayers and the sacraments of the Church, especially the Divine Eucharist, are expressions of full unity – in faith, in life, in service of God and man – as given by God. This unity with other Christians we seek, but we have not reached it yet. Therefore in the Orthodox understanding, no form of concelebration, i.e., no joint participation in liturgical prayer or the sacraments, with those who do not belong to the Orthodox Church can be permitted, for it would imply a unity which in reality does not exist. It would imply deceiving ourselves, deceiving others, and creating the impression that the Orthodox Church acknowledges that which in fact she does not acknowledge."[64]

[64] *The Orthodox Church*, May, 1969; *Eastern Churches Review*, Autumn, 1969, pp. 425-26. "It is natural to surmise," writes Andrew Psarev, "that this epistle, to a certain degree, appeared as a result of the private meetings held at the time between Metropolitans Philaret and Irinei, first hierarch of the North American Metropolia" (op. cit., p. 7)

## *THE THEOLOGY OF PEACE*

Paralleling the development of ecumenism was the so-called "movement for peace" and "theology of peace", whose origins can be traced to the founding of NATO to defend Europe against Soviet aggression on April 4, 1949. From the viewpoint of Marxism-Leninism, NATO was not a defensive organization but a threat to world peace.

In line with this position, the MP organized a series of ecumenical conferences "in defence of peace" with representatives not only of the Christian confessions, but also of Hinduism, Buddhism, Judaism, Islam, Shintoism and Sikhism. Insofar as these religious "fighters for peace" worshipped completely different gods or (in the case of Buddhism) no god at all, there was no place at these conferences for the specifically *Christian* understanding of peace. Thus there was no mention of the fact that peace on earth is possible only if there is peace with God, which is obtained only through faith in the redeeming work of Christ, Who "is our peace" (Ephesians 2.14), and through a constant struggle with evil in all its forms, including atheism and communism. Moreover, as Kurochkin writes, "on the pages of the ecclesiastical press and on the lips of those speaking before the believers, the similarity and closeness of the communist and Christian social and moral ideals was proclaimed more and more often." And so the cult of Stalin was transformed into the cult of communism; for "the patriarchal church, having conquered the renovationists, was forced to assimilate the heritage of the conquered not only in the field of political re-orientation, but also in the sphere of ideological reconstruction."[65]

The gospel of "Communist Christianity" appeared in an encyclical of the patriarchate "in connection with the Great October Socialist Revolution", which supposedly "turned into reality the dreams of many generations of people. It made all the natural riches of the land and means of production into the inheritance of the people. It *changed the very essence of human relations*, making all our citizens equal and excluding from our society any possibility of enmity between peoples of difference races and nationalities, of different persuasions, faiths and social conditions."[66]

Insofar as the MP confessed that the revolution "changed the very essence of human relations" for the better, it renounced the Christian Faith for that of the faith of the Antichrist. This aspect of the MP's apostasy is often forgotten. And of course now, since the fall of communism, the MP no longer talks about its enthusiasm for the antichristian creed of communism. But by any normal definition of words, the hierarchs of the MP ceased to be, not only Orthodox in any meaningful sense, but also Christian at this time…

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[65] P.K. Kurochkin, *Evoliutsia sovremennogo russkogo pravoslavia (The Evolution of Contemporary Russian Orthodoxy)*, Moscow, 1971, pp. 81, 82.

[66] *Zhurnal Moskovskoj Patriarkhii (The Journal of the Moscow Patriarchate)*, 1967; translated in *Orthodox Life*, № 110, March-April, 1968, p. 25.

"The so-called 'theology of peace'," wrote Protopresbyter George Grabbe, "is in essence the chiliastic preaching of the Kingdom of God on earth, with the help of the planting of communist socialism. In their address to the Moscow council before the election of the patriarch in 1971 the Priest Nicholas Gainov and three laymen raised questions in relation to the speeches of Metropolitan Nicodemus [of Leningrad] and his co-workers. They cited his words on the union of people amongst themselves in 'the service of reconciliation' with the aim thereby of 'seizing the Kingdom of God that is coming in strength'. *The Journal of the Moscow Patriarchate* wrote: 'For the Christian religion there can be no indifferent or neutral spheres of activity. The changes that are taking place in the world are viewed by Christianity as the action of the Providence of God, the manifestation of the power of God with the aim of establishing the Kingdom of God on earth' (1962, № 12, p. 12).

"The peace which the Moscow patriarchate is clamouring for is not spiritual peace, but political peace, and moreover, a false peace, for the so-called 'theology of peace' is linked with the deceptive propaganda of the Soviets. In trying to echo communist propaganda, the patriarchate is involuntarily falling into the preaching of a certain kind of chiliasm, that is, the attainment of a golden age and general peace by human means of a political character. If the Saviour said: 'Seek first of all the Kingdom of God, and all the rest will be added to you,' the Moscow patriarchate puts the question in the reverse order: the Kingdom of God must be attained through the external means of the communist social order.

"That is why, in his report 'Peace and Freedom' at the local conference of the movement for peace in Holland in 1963, Metropolitan Nicodemus called for the Church to come closer to this world. 'From ancient times,' he said, 'the apologists of the unchangeability of social relations have begun to incline the thoughts of Christians to complete alienation from the world with the aim of drawing them away from burning social problems, for the struggle for the reconstruction of society on the principles of justice. Under the long influence of this pseudo-Christian preaching whole generations of narrow fanatics have been educated and grown up with distorted ideas about Christianity' (*J.M.P.*, 1963, № 1, p. 40).

"What is Metropolitan Nicodemus renouncing in these words? He is renouncing the patristic and ascetic past, he is trying to turn the Church from striving for heaven to the path of earthly social tasks. His Kingdom of God on earth is the communist order.

"He is echoed by Protopriest V.M. Borovoj, who expressed himself still more vividly: 'Systematic theology and the historical churches have never been on the side of the revolution for the simple reason that they were prisoners of the cosmo-centric understanding of reality, prisoners of the static understanding of an order established once and for all on earth. Only in the last decades, when profound changes, a kind of revolution, have taken place in philosophical, theological and scientific thought as the result of an anthropocentric view of the cosmos, an evolutionary conception of the universe and a new rethinking of the whole history of

humanity – only after all this has there appeared the possibility of working out a theology of development and revolution' (*J.M.P.*, 1966, № 9, p. 78)…

"By moving in this apostatic direction the Moscow patriarchate has already lost Christianity itself, replacing it with the religion of this world. Contrary to the word of the Saviour (Matthew 6.24), it is trying to serve two masters, and, as the Saviour warned, it has arrived at the point where it is careless with regard to Christianity but ardent in serving atheist communism."[67]

[67] Grabbe, *Dogmat o Tserkvi v sovremennom mire (The Dogma of the Church in the Contemporary World)*, report to the Third All-Diaspora Council, 1974 ®.

## *THE COUNCILS OF 1971*

In May-June, 1971 there was a council of the MP attended by 75 hierarchs, 85 clergy and 78 laymen, representatives of many other Orthodox Churches and the general secretary of the WCC. It confirmed all the previous decisions made by the MP since 1945. Only one candidate for the patriarchate (Patriarch Alexis had died in April) was put forward: the weak Metropolitan Pimen, who was elected unanimously in an open ballot (a secret ballot was not allowed by the all-powerful Metropolitan Nicodemus).[68]

The Council also confirmed the 1961 statute taking control of the parishes away from the bishops and clergy,[69] as well as Metropolitan Nicodemus' report on the decision to give communion to Catholics, in which he said that the measure was justified "insofar as we have a common of faith with them in relation to the sacraments".[70]

The MP council also resolved: "to entrust to the higher ecclesiastical authority of the Russian Orthodox Church to continue efforts to reunite with the Mother Church the so-called Russian Orthodox Church Abroad (the Karlovtsy schism), the Ukrainian Autocephalous Orthodox Church Abroad and other scattered children of hers… In view of the fact that the activity of supporters of the so-called Russian Orthodox Church Abroad… against the Mother Russian Orthodox Church and against the Holy Orthodox Church as a whole is harming Holy Orthodoxy, the higher ecclesiastical authority of the Moscow Patriarchate is entrusted with realizing in the nearest future the necessary canonical sanctions in relation to the apostate assembly.., the Karlotsy schism and its unrepentant followers."[71]

ROCOR's Hierarchical Council reacted to the MP council by passing two resolutions. The first, dated September 1/14, 1971 declared: "The free part of the Russian Church, which is beyond the frontiers of the USSR, is heart and soul with the confessors of the faith who… are called 'the True Orthodox Christians', and who

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[68] The former KGB Lieutenant-Colonel Constantine Preobrazhensky writes: "They say that the first Communist within the church was Patriarch Pimen. He was a Senior Officer of the Red Army, and joined the Communist Party at the front. There could not have been any officers who believed in God, nor officers who were not Communist Party members. More than that, they were all forced to fight religion. That means that the future patriarch of the MP renounced his faith" ("Putin's Espionage Church", http://portal-credo.ru/site/print.php?act=english&id=281).

In the same article Preobrazhensky points out not only that all MP bishops were KGB agents, but also that they engaged in espionage. Thus in 1969 Metropolitan Irenaeus of Vienna and Austria recruited the American military intelligence officer George Trofimov, who served a sentence in the United States.

[69] In his *Memoirs* Archbishop Basil of Brussels recalls asking the formerly Catacomb Archbishop Benjamin (Novitsky) of Irkutsk why he had not spoken against this measure. Benjamin replied: "You know, I did 12 years forced labour in Kolyma. I don't have the strength at my age to start that again. Forgive me!" (Monk Benjamin, op. cit., part 5, p. 47).

[70] *Zhurnal Moskovskoj Patriarkhii* (*Journal of the Moscow Patriarchate*), 1971, № 7, p. 31, № 8, pp. 23-24; Monk Benjamin, op. cit., part 5, pp. 47-49.

[71] Monk Benjamin, op. cit., part 5, p. 49.

often go by the name of 'the Catacomb Church'… The Council of Bishops recognizes its spiritual unity with them…"

The second, of the same date, is called "Resolution of the Russian Orthodox Church Outside of Russia Concerning the Election of Pimen (Izvekov) as Patriarch of Moscow": "All of the elections of Patriarchs in Moscow, beginning in 1943, are invalid on the basis of the 30th Canon of the Holy Apostles and the 3rd Canon of the 7th Ecumenical Council, according to which, 'if any bishop, having made use of secular rulers, should receive through them Episcopal authority in the Church, let him be defrocked and excommunicated along with all those in communion with him'. The significance that the Fathers of the 7th Council gave to such an offence is obvious from the very fact of a double punishment for it, that is, not only deposition but excommunication as well, something unusual for ecclesiastical law. The famous commentator on Canon Law, Bishop Nicodemus of Dalmatia, gives the following explanation of the 30th Canon of the Holy Apostles: 'If the Church condemned unlawful influence by the secular authorities in the ordination of bishops at a time when the rulers were Christians, then it follows that She should condemn such action all the more when the latter are pagans and place even heavier penalties on the guilty parties, who were not ashamed of asking for help from pagan rulers and the authorities subordinated to them, in order to gain the episcopate. This (30th) Canon has such cases in view'. If in defence of this position examples are given of the Patriarchs of Constantinople who were placed on the Throne at the caprice of the Turkish Sultans, one can reply that no anomaly can be regarded as a norm and that one breach of Canon Law cannot justify another.

"The election of Pimen (Izvekov) as Patriarch of Moscow and All Russia at the gathering calling itself an All-Russian Church Council in Moscow the 2nd of June of this year, on the authority of the 3rd Canon of the 7th Ecumenical Council and other reasons set forth in this decision, is to be regarded as unlawful and void, and all of his acts and directions as having no strength."

However, in 1974 ROCOR did confirm one measure adopted by the MP's 1971 Council: the removal of the curses on the old rites and those who observed them.[72] This did not by itself make the Old Ritualists Orthodox; but it removed the main obstacle to their rejoining the Orthodox Church, taking to its logical conclusion Tsar Paul's introduction of the yedinoverie in 1801, which allowed Old Ritualists who joined the Orthodox Church to retain their use of the Old Rites.

On September 28, 1971, ROCOR's Hierarchical Council decreed: "The lack of accord of the decree of the Moscow Patriarchate, concerning the granting of communion to Roman Catholics, with Orthodox dogmatic teaching and the Church canons is completely clear to any person even slightly informed in theology. It was justly condemned by a decree of the Synod of the Church of Greece. The holy canons do permit the communication of a great sinner who is under penance (epitimia) when he is about to die (I Ecumenical 13, Carthage 6, Gregory of Nyssa 2 and 5), but

[72] Monk Benjamin, op. cit., part 5, pp. 49-50.

there is not a single canon which would extend this to include persons foreign to the Orthodox Church, as long as they have not renounced their false doctrines. No matter what explanation Metropolitan Nicodemus and the other Moscow hierarchs might try to give of this act, it is completely clear that by this decision, even though with certain limitations, communion has been established between the Moscow Patriarchate and Roman Catholics. Furthermore, the latter have already made the decision to permit members of the Orthodox Church to receive communion from them. All this was particularly clearly demonstrated in the service held on December 14, 1970, in St. Peter's Basilica in Rome, when Metropolitan Nicodemus gave communion to Catholic clerics. It is perfectly clear that this act could not be justified by any need. By this act the Moscow Patriarchate has betrayed Orthodoxy. If the 45th Canon of the Holy Apostles excommunicates from the Church an Orthodox bishop or cleric who has 'only prayed together with heretics', and the 10th Apostolic Canon forbids even prayer together with those who are excommunicated, what can we say about a bishop who dares to offer the Holy Mysteries to them? If catechumens must leave the church before the sanctification of the Gifts and are not permitted even at point of death to receive communion until they are united to the Church, how can one justify the communicating of persons who, being members of heretical communities, are much farther away from the Church than a catechumen, who is preparing to unite with her? The act of the Moscow Synod, which was confirmed by the recent Council of the Moscow Patriarchate in Moscow, extends the responsibility for this un-Orthodox decision to all participants of the Moscow Council and to their entire Church organization. The decision to admit Catholics to communion is an act that is not only anticanonical, but heretical as well, as inflicting harm on the Orthodox doctrine of the Church, since only true members of the Church are called to communicate of the Body and Blood of Christ in the Eucharist. The Moscow decree, logically considered, recognizes as her members those who, through their doctrinal errors, in both heart and mind are far from her."

On the same day the Council issued an important statement on the reception of heretics, considerably "tightening up" its practice: "The Holy Church has from antiquity believed that there can be only one true baptism, namely that which is accomplished in her bosom: 'One Lord, one Faith, one Baptism' (Ephesians 4.5). In the Symbol of Faith "one baptism" is also confessed, while the 46th canon of the Holy Apostles indicates: 'We order that a bishop or priest who has accepted (that is, recognized) the baptism or sacrifice of heretics should be deposed.'

"However, when the zeal of any heretics in their struggle against the Church weakened, and when there was a question of their mass conversion to Orthodoxy, the Church, to ease their union, accepted them into her bosom by another rite. [There follows a discussion of St. Basil the Great's first canonical epistle.]

"And so St. Basil the Great, and through his words the Ecumenical Council, in establishing the principle that outside the Holy Orthodox Church there is no true baptism, allowed out of pastoral condescension, so-called oikonomia, the acceptance of certain heretics and schismatics without a new baptism. And in accordance with

this principle, the Ecumenical Councils allowed the reception of heretics by various rites, taking account of the weakening of their fierceness against the Orthodox Church….

"In relation to the Roman Catholics and Protestants who claim to preserve baptism as a sacrament (for example, the Lutherans), the practice was introduced from the time of Peter the First of receiving them without baptism, through the renunciation of heresy and chrismation of Protestants and unconfirmed Catholics. Before Peter Catholics were baptised in Russia. In Greece the practice also changed, but for almost three hundred years, after a certain break, the practice of baptising those who came from Catholicism and Protestantism was again introduced. Those who are received by another rite are not recognized as Orthodox in Greece. In many cases also such children of our Russian Church were not even allowed to receive Holy Communion.

"Bearing in mind this circumstance, and the present growth of the ecumenical heresy, which tries completely to wipe out the difference between Orthodoxy and every heresy, so that the Moscow Patriarchate, in spite of the sacred canons, has issued a resolution allowing Roman Catholics to be communed in certain cases, the Hierarchical Council has recognized the introduction of a stricter practice to be necessary, that is, that all heretics coming to the Church should be baptized, and that only insofar as it is necessary and with the permission of the bishop, from considerations of oikonomia, should another practice be allowed in relation to certain people, that is, the reception into the Church of Roman Catholics and Protestants who have been baptised in the name of the Holy Trinity through renunciation of heresy and chrismation."[73]

This decision brought the practice of ROCOR back into line with the practice of the Russian Church under Patriarch Philaret in the early seventeenth century, and of the Greek Church since 1756. "It should be noted," writes Psarev, "that, within the Russian Orthodox Church Abroad, it was Bishop James of Manhattan, who led the American Orthodox Mission for a period of time, who first began the reception of Catholics by baptism, regarding which he informed the Council of Bishops in 1953."[74] Now the Russian bishops followed the lead taken by their "convert" colleague…

[73] *Tserkovnaia Zhizn'* (Church Life), July-December, 1971, pp. 52-54; Monk Benjamin, op. cit., part 5, pp. 52-53.
[74] Psarev, op. cit., pp. 7-8.

This last decision was also undoubtedly influenced by the happy fact that at the same time ROCOR had achieved union with the second Greek Old Calendarist Synod, that of the Matthewites. For the practice of both Greek Old Calendarist Synods, the Florinites and Matthewites, was stricter in relation to the reception of heretics was stricter than ROCOR's. Unfortunately, however, most of the ROCOR hierarchs paid scant attention to this decision…

On December 18/31, 1969, Metropolitan Philaret and his Synod officially recognized the Florinite hierarchy led by Archbishop Auxentius[75], and wrote to him: "The many trials which the Orthodox Church has endured from the beginning of its history are especially great in our evil times, and consequently, this especially requires unity among those who are truly devoted to the Faith of the Fathers. With these sentiments we wish to inform you that the Synod of Bishops of the Russian Orthodox Church Abroad recognizes the validity of the episcopal ordinations of your predecessor of blessed memory, the reposed Archbishop Acacius, and the consequent ordinations of your Holy Church. Hence, taking into account also various other circumstances, our hierarchical Synod esteems your hierarchy as brothers in Christ in full communion with us."[76]

The members of the Florinite Synod now were: Archbishop Auxentius and Metropolitans Gerontius of Piraeus, Acacius of Diauleia and Chrysostom (Naslimis) of Magnesia. In July, 1971 Auxentius and Gerontius ordained Metropolitans Paisius (Euthymiadis) of Euripus and Euboea, Chrysostom (Kiousis) of Thessalonica, Callinicus (Khaniotis) of Thaumakou and Acacius (Douskos) of Canada. And in 1973 Metropolitans Anthony (Thanasis) of Megara and Gabriel (Kalamisakis) of the Cyclades were ordained.

The Matthewites continued to denounce the Florinites as schismatics, but for the rest of the Orthodox world this act by the ROCOR Synod dispelled any lingering doubts about their canonicity. So on September 1/14, 1971, the Matthewites sent an exarchate, consisting of Metropolitans Callistus of Corinth and Epiphanius of Kition (Cyprus) and the Chancellor, Protopriest Eugene Tombros, to the Synod of ROCOR in New York.[77] They went, as the Matthewites wrote to the Russians some years later, "in order to come into contact with your Synod and regularize spiritual communion with you for the strengthening of the Holy Struggle of Orthodoxy".[78]

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[75] In 1964, after the death of Archbishop Acacius (the elder), Bishops Gerontius and Acacius (the younger) elected Auxentius as archbishop – but without the agreement of Bishop Chrysostom (Naslimes), whose fears about the fitness of Auxentius were soon to prove tragically justified… Bishop Acacius the Younger also came bitterly to regret his putting forward the name of the relatively unknown Auxentius (Bishop Photius of Marathon, personal communication, July 11/24, 2005).

[76] Holy Transfiguration Monastery, Boston, *The Struggle against Ecumenism*, 1998, pp. 82-83.

[77] Metropolitans Callistus and Epiphanius had already visited the ROCOR in America in 1969, as guests of Holy Transfiguration Monastery, Boston.

[78] Letter of February 20, 1976 from the Matthewite Synod to the Russian Synod, *Kyrix Gnision Orthodoxon (Herald of the True Orthodox Christians)*, February, 1976, pp. 5-12 (G).

Or, as Metropolitan Epiphanius put it in a letter to Metropolitan Philaret, "I went to carry out with you a common duty 48 years late. I went with the conviction that, through human weakness, we carried out in 1971 what we should have done in 1924… I believed that in entering into sacramental communion with you I became with you the same Body and Blood of Jesus Christ."[79]

But the Matthewites, according to their own account, did not immediately seek communion in prayer with the Russians. First they asked what the Russians' attitude to the new calendarists was. The Russians replied that the introduction of the new calendar was a mistake, and promised, in the person of Archbishop Philotheus of Hamburg, that they would not henceforth concelebrate with the new calendarists. However, they did not say whether they regarded the new calendarists as having valid sacraments.

Apparently satisfied with this reply, the Matthewites asked for the Russians to pass judgement on their own canonical situation. More precisely, the exarchate in their letter of September, 1971 wrote that their Synod had entrusted them "to enter into negotiations with your Holy Synod with regard to the sacred struggle for Orthodoxy. As regards the question of our ordinations (the ordination of a bishop by one bishop) we communicate the following to your Holy Synod."

There then followed a short justification of Bishop Matthew's ordinations, concluding that "there could not remain any doubt" about their canonicity. "In view of this," they concluded, "we present the present petition for the review of your Holy Synod, and we are ready to accept any decision it makes on the basis of the holy canons".

But if there could be no doubt about Matthew's ordinations, what, precisely were the Matthewites asking the Russians to do? Simply to agree with them, and then enter into communion with them without more ado? But in that case their readiness "to accept any decision [they made] on the basis of the holy canons" was somewhat disingenuous, since they had already made it clear that, in their opinion, the only canonical decision was to accept their point of view…

Having examined the Matthewite case, on September 15/28, the Russians presented, in writing, a dogmatic-canonical examination of the case of ordinations by one bishop only. They noted that while single-handed ordinations of bishops were strictly speaking uncanonical, they might be justified by special circumstances (the existence of persecution, and the lack of another bishop in the vicinity). And so three single-handed ordinations carried out by Bishop Gabriel of Zarna in 1825 were recognized as justified by the Constantinopolitan Synod of 1834, whereas his ordination of Procopius was not recognized as justified and was deemed to be invalid. Both Gabriel and Procopius were forgiven and restored to their Episcopal rank. In other words, it rested with the decision of a later Synod to recognize the original ordinations as valid or invalid…

[79] Letter of Pascha, 1979 from Metropolitan Epiphanius to Metropolitan Philaret (F).

The Russians continued: "The demand that at least two bishops should participate in the ordination of a bishop has yet one more explanation. According to the words of the Apostle Paul: 'The lesser is blessed by the greater' (Hebrews 7.7). It is evident that when a bishop ordains a priest, this principle is observed. But for a bishop one bishop is not 'greater'. 'Greater' for him is a Council of Bishops. Therefore the ordination of a bishop by one bishop violates the Orthodox principle of ecclesiastical hierarchy.

"Consequently, in spite of the fact that the zeal of the followers of Bishop Matthew in preserving the ecclesiastical traditions and the ecclesiastical calendar is praiseworthy, the bishops who received their ordinations from Matthew are not in any way to be reproached, with the exception of their ordination itself, nevertheless many preferred to remain without a bishop than submit to them, to the extent that their appeared a hierarchy [the Florinites] which had both zeal in defending the ecclesiastical traditions and ordinations performed by canonical bishops.

"Any ordination carried out without observing the canons is already in essence invalid, even if it is carried out by completely canonical bishops… Hence we can understand why the ordination of Archbishop Acacius and the following ordinations elicited doubts among many until they were confirmed and legalised by the decision of (our) Synod.

"However, by means of oikonomia unlawful actions can receive the force of sacraments without repeating their performance. St. Basil the Great writes in his First Canon about the Cathars, who were deprived of the gifts of the Holy Spirit insofar as they were schismatics. But by means of oikonomia he allowed them to be received into communion without a new baptism. And the Eighth Canon of the First Ecumenical Council speaks about them as follows: 'Concerning those who once called themselves 'Pure', but have been united to the Catholic and Apostolic Church, it is pleasing to the Holy and Great Council that after the laying of hands upon them, they should remain in the clergy.'

"There exist various opinions in relation to how these words, 'the laying on of hands', should be understood. Aristene understands them in the sense of chrismation. His opinion is shared by Bishop John of Smolensk. Apparently, however, a more authoritative opinion was given by St. Tarasius at the Seventh Ecumenical Council. When someone asked him how the words on the laying on of hands in the Eighth Canon of the First Ecumenical Council should be understood, he explained that this was not an ordination, but something else, signifying only a blessing. We can agree with Bishop Nicodemus Milash that, on the basis of the authoritative interpretation of St. Tarasius, '… the meaning of these words in the given Canon of Nicaea is that when the Novationist clergy passed over from schism to the Church, the Orthodox bishop or priest had to lay hands on their heads, as takes place in the sacrament of repentance, and then read over them a definite prayer reconciling them with the Church'. Such was the order of reception of the

Donatists into the Church, who were much more stubborn schismatics than the Novationists (Canon 79 of the Council of Carthage).

"From what has been said at the beginning of the present Definition it is evident that the Old Calendarists led by the hierarchy of Matthewite ordination cannot be compared with such schismatics as the Donatists and Novationists. These Old Calendarists did not sin as regards Orthodoxy, but they only violated hierarchical order in their striving to defend the Orthodox teaching when the ordination of bishops was carried out by Bishop Matthew on his own. The simple recognition of their ordinations could elicit a scandal, as being a direct violation of the First Apostolic Canon, the Fourth of the First Ecumenical Council and the Third of the Seventh Ecumenical Council.

"It is evident from the cited examples that there is sufficient basis to apply oikonomia in relation to them, in accordance with the Eighth Canon of the First Ecumenical Council and the 79th of the Council of Carthage.

"Taking into account all that has been said above, and also the desire to attain the union of all those who are devoted to True Orthodoxy that was expressed by Archbishop Auxentius, the Hierarchical Council adopted the following decision:

"1. To recognize the possibility of fulfilling the petition of Metropolitans Callistus and Epiphanius. To that end, two bishops must perform the laying-on of hands over them. They, in turn, must subsequently perform the same over their brethren, and all bishops [must perform the same rite] over the priests.

"2. To oblige Metropolitans Callistus and Epiphanius, as well as their brethren, to take all possible steps to unite their hierarchy, clergy, and people with those who are headed by his Beatitude, Archbishop Auxentius.

"3. To inform his Beatitude, Archbishop Auxentius, concerning the aforesaid [decision].

"4. To delegate the Most Reverend Archbishop Philotheus and Bishop Constantine to fulfil the provision of paragraph one of this Resolution at Transfiguration Monastery in Boston."[80]

It must be recognized that with regard to the vital question whether Matthew's original ordinations were valid or not this Definition was ambiguous – probably deliberately so. On the one hand, it cited canons, such as the 8th of the First Ecumenical Council and the 79th of the Council of Carthage that related originally to schismatics. On the other hand, it deliberately rejected comparison with these schismatics, saying: "it is evident that the Old Calendarists led by the hierarchy of Matthewite ordination can*not* be compared with such schismatics as the Donatists

[80] Translated from the Russian text in *Vozdvizhenie (Exaltation),* 1999, № 8 (28), pp. 10-15 ®. See also *The Struggle against Ecumenism,* op. cit., pp. 95, 97.

and Novationists". So were the Matthewites schismatics or not, in the Russians' opinion? We cannot say for certain…

The laying on of hands duly took place, on September 17/30 and September 18 / October 1. On the same day (October 1) Metropolitan Philaret wrote to Archbishop Auxentius: "They [Metropolitans Callistus and Epiphanius] laid before us the question of their hierarchy, and declared that they relied completely on the decision of our Council, which they were obliged to accept whatever it might be.

"We rejoiced at the humility and firm Orthodox faith with which they came to us. Therefore we treated them with brotherly love and the hope that their good feelings would serve the affair of a general union. We based our decision also on the fact that the indicated hierarchs agreed to do all they could to unite with your Church. That is, what seemed to you and us unrealizable, with the help of the grace of God turned out to be possible. We hope that your Beatitude, being led by the Holy Spirit, will treat them with brotherly love and that through your and our joint efforts all will be united by you…"

However, almost immediately there was much controversy over the precise meaning of what the Russian bishops had done to the Matthewite bishops. Some claimed that these were real ordinations (kheirotoniai), adducing the following facts: (a) that the Russians in their text of September 15/28 explicitly stated that they were not simply going to recognize the Matthewite orders, (b) that the Russians in the same text explained that in the history of the Church the clergy of certain graceless schismatics, such as the Catharoi, were received into the clergy of the Orthodox by kheirothesia, simple laying-on of hands, and not by re-ordination, which was an exercise of economy but by no means a recognition of the schismatics' ordinations, and (c) that, as Bishop Laurus, the secretary of the Russian Synod pointed out on a trip to Greece, the kheirothesias on Metropolitans Callistos and Epiphanius were carried out, not on the same, but on successive days, which clearly implied that they were equivalent to ordinations.[81]

Against this view, however, are the following facts: (a) the words of the Act, in which the word kheirothesia and its Russian equivalent, and not kheirotonia and its Russian equivalent, are used;[82] (b) the English text of a letter sent by Metropolitan Philaret to Archbishop Andrew, in which the sacrament was described as "the laying-on of hands which was given as a Blessing for Your Beatitude's Sacred Hierarchy"[83]; (c) the English text of a letter sent by Metropolitan Philaret to

[81] Irenée Doens, "Les Palaioimérologites: Alerte pour leurs Monastères" (The Old Calendarists: Alarm for their Monasteries), *Irénikon*, 1973, p. 48 (F).

[82] "Anegnoristhi i kanonikotis ton kheirotonion tis paratakseos imon" (The Canonicity of the Ordinations of our Faction has been Recognised), *Kyrix Gnision Orthodoxon (Herald of the True Orthodox Christians)*, № 17, November, 1971, pp. 3-14 (G). The Russian text of the official Act reproduced in the same Matthewite organ declares that the Russians "read prayers with the laying on of hands [Russian: prochitali molitvy s vozlozheniem ruk]" on the two hierarchs.

[83] Letter of Metropolitan Philaret to Archbishop Andrew, 21 October / 3 November, 1972. Bishop Laurus also signed as Secretary of the Synod.

Metropolitan Epiphanius, in which the sacrament was described as no more than "a prayer of absolution"[84] – presumably the removal of the stain attaching to the Matthewite orders because of their derivation from one bishop only; (d) the text of an Encyclical of the Florinites, which said that the Florinites had been informed that "the Synod of the all-sacred Philaret has decided to recognize as canonical the pseudo-bishops of the reposed Mr. Matthew"[85]; and (e) a letter of Protopriest George Grabbe, secretary of the ROCOR Synod: "Bishops Callistus and Epiphanius were not ordained by our Synod. They were accepted into communion as bishops with only the laying of hands on them, already in bishops' vestments, according to the 8th canon of the First Ecumenical Council. That was to rectify the irregularity caused by the founding of their hierarchy through the ordination originally performed by one bishop."[86]

Another important consideration here is: why did the Russians not hand this question over to the Florinites? After all, they recognized the Florinites as a truly Orthodox Greek hierarchy, so the question of the status of another Greek hierarchy was surely a matter for them rather than for ROCOR. There appear to be two possible answers to this question. Either the Russians took this matter into their own hands because they believed (as did the Matthewites) that the Florinites would not accept the ordinations of the Matthewites and so the union would not take place. Or they were not convinced that the Florinites were the *only* True Orthodox in Greece…

"Unfortunately, the conditions laid down by the Russian Church Abroad and agreed to by the Matthewite representatives were only partially implemented in Greece. The Matthewite Synod agreed to the first condition (that the rite of kheirothesia be performed over their bishops), but refused to comply with the second (that the same rite by performed over their priests and deacons), though a number of their clergy persistently requested it. In a privately published memorandum, dated March 17, 1977, Metropolitan Epiphanius of Cyprus – and also Metropolitan Callistus of Corinth, in private memoranda and open letters which he wrote – rebuked their fellow Matthewite bishops and clergy for showing bad faith and for bearing the burden of guilt in the breakdown of their negotiations with the Florinites and the souring of their relations with the Church Abroad."[87]

For a very short period the two Greek Synods called each other "brothers in Christ", and in the opinion of the present writer this is what they in fact were (and are). For it makes no ecclesiological sense to claim that two Churches which derive their orders or correction of their orders from the same source, are in communion with each through that source, and have the same confession of faith, can be of a different status ecclesiologically. That there was no difference in faith between the two Synods was confirmed on June 5, 1974, when, in an encyclical to its clergy, the

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[84] Protocol № 146, Holy Diocese of Kition, G.O.C. (F).
[85] Encyclical № 534, dated 18 September, 1971. See Eleutherios Goutzides, in *Kirix Gnision Orthodoxon (Herald of the True Orthodox Christians)*, 42, № 237, October, 1997, pp. 262-263 (G).
[86] Grabbe, letter to Mr. Shallcross, October 25, 1973.
[87] *The Struggle against Ecumenism,* op. cit., pp. 97-98.

Auxentiite Synod reaffirmed that the new calendarists were schismatics with no grace of sacraments and should be received into the True Church by chrismation: "The ministration of the Holy Gifts to the new calendarists has been forbidden since the beginning of the schism of the official Church; and you must observe this line of conduct unswervingly in a spirit of discipline towards our ecclesiastical traditions. If someone joins our ranks from the new calendar, an indispensable condition of his acceptance is the confession of faith and the condemnation of every heresy and innovation, including the new calendar, by the acceptance of which the Greek Church became schismatic from 1924, as the reformer Archbishop Chrysostom Papadopoulos himself averred, and in consequence of which its sacraments are deprived of sanctifying grace. If people who have been baptised in that Church convert to the Faith, they must again be chrismated with holy chrism of canonical origin, in accordance with the First Canon of St. Basil the Great."[88]

This confession of the faith removed the main obstacle to union with the Matthewites – the suspicion that the Auxentiites really recognised the new calendarists. However, it had no effect on the Matthewites, who went even further to the right by rejecting the 1971 kheirothesia, declaring: "1. We accepted spiritual communion with the Russian Synod after an oral declaration-assurance with regard to agreement and unity in the faith, i.e. the confession-ecclesiology of the True Orthodox Church. 2. We accepted the kheirothesia as an external act – and wholly formal, in order to efface the pretext of anticanonicity which the followers of the former [Bishop] of Florina, i.e. the Acacians, had put forward in opposition to unity, and not as something that affected the Hierarchy, which was dogmatically complete and perfect. 3. We accept that there were canonical breaches (irregularities), but what moved us was the fact that the Russians, in accordance with the declarations of the Exarchate, had confessed the True Confession. However, when the opposite started to reveal itself, after desperate attempts which lasted for approximately four years, we were compelled to break off spiritual communion, being indifferent to the issue of the kheirothesia, because neither had anything been added to us, nor subtracted from us. … 4. Yes, as has been revealed, the act of 1971 was a robber act, which had been previously constructed by the enemies of the Church."[89]

Again, on November 28, 2007 the Matthewite Synod under Archbishop Nicholas declared: "The so called *laying-on-of-hands* which was performed by the ROCOR in 1971, according to the faith of the Genuine Orthodox Church of Greece and according to its ecclesiastical totality, neither added to, or gave legitimacy, wholeness, grace or power to the high-priesthoodness of the Bishops of the Church

[88] Full text in *The Struggle against Ecumenism*, op. cit., pp. 99-100. A footnote to the encyclical declared: "The present encyclical was ready to be issued on April 4, 1973. It has been postponed until now awaiting his Eminence, Bishop Peter of Astoria, who, though invited repeatedly to endorse the encyclical, refused to do so. On this account, in its meeting of June 5, 1974, the Holy Synod struck him from its membership and removed him from the exarchate of the True Orthodox Christians of America." (*The Struggle against Ecumenism*, op. cit., p. 100). According to Lardas (op. cit., p. 21), Bishop Peter refused to sign the encyclical "on advice from the Synod of the ROCA".

[89] *Kirix Gnision Orthodoxon (Herald of the True Orthodox Christians)*, March, 1984, pp. 102-103, Epistle № 1897 of March 1; *The Struggle against Ecumenism*, op. cit., pp. 87-100.

of the GOC of Greece - and in a strict *canonical review* should never have been permitted to have taken place."[90]

[90] See also its Epistle of February, 2008 (http://www.orthodox-christianity.net/cheirothesia_of_1971.html).

# *CAUCASIAN SAINTS*

The meeting and union, however temporary, of the Russian and Greek True Orthodox was a sign of the times. With the relaxation of persecution in the Soviet Union, the hitherto isolated national Churches were beginning to extend feelers towards each other. One area in which some interrelations had never been interrupted was the eastern Black Sea Coast, where Russians, Georgians and Pontic Greeks mixed and worshipped together.

Nun Helena was born in Minsk, Belorussia of noble parents who were related to both the Russian and the Greek ruling families (through Queen Olga of the Hellenes, Abbess Tamara Romanov of the Convent of the Ascension, Eleon, Jerusalem was her cousin). According to Olga Abramides, who had been healed by the saint and lived with her for some months in her hermitage, the family of the blessed one had nine children (six daughters and three sons), all of whom embraced the monastic life at an early age.

Helena and her sister Nina struggled under the direction of a certain virtuous abbess in a coenobitic monastery near Batumi, in Georgia, in order to learn the monastic life. The only photograph of Mother Helena shows her wearing the great schema.

At this time there died a virtuous bishop in the Batumi area. During his burial the face of the virtuous bishop sweated, and came down in streams which the faithful standing by gathered up with reverence. Mother Helena took some of this "holy water" and kept it for the next 75 years. Through her faith, and the faith of those sufferers who came to her, this "holy water" became wonder-working.

After the revolution, the monastery in which the sisters were struggling was destroyed by the Bolsheviks, and they sought refuge in the Caucasus mountains, in an impassable ravine one hour's walk from the village of Chin, in a thick forest of evergreen trees. For the first two years of their struggle here, the sisters lived in complete isolation. Their only food was a little warm water and a prosphora once a day, which appeared in a miraculous way. Later, when the villagers learned about them and began to help them, and they began to cultivate a garden, the fresh prosphora ceased to come…

During the winter they lived in an underground passage. Then the villagers helped them to build a typical Russian cell made out of trunks of trees with a stove. They ate only once a day – boiled potatoes. They never had oil. For Pascha, "to honour the day", they ate one egg.

The nuns had no communion with the official Churches of Russia or Georgia, and when clergy from these Churches would come up to meet them, Mother Helena would not let them into her cell, nor allow them to celebrate Divine services. For

confession and communion they themselves went down to Sukhumi to an exiled priest of Bulgarian origin.

Once some secret policemen tried to catch them. However, Mother Helena was hidden in a miraculous manner, so they found only Mother Nina.

"Are you praying?" one of them asked.

"Yes," she replied, "for all the Christians. And also for you, since you were baptized in the Name of Christ but have denied Him."

In 1957 the hermitage was struck by fire. Flames were destroying everything. Then Mother Helena knelt down, raised her hands to heaven and fervently prayed to the Mother of God to help her servants. The Mother of God appeared and put out the fire! And as a sign of her appearance she left the mark of her immaculate foot there. From that time many people came to the hermitage to venerate the foot-print of the Mother of God.

To repair the damage caused by the fire, Mother Helena accepted help from the villagers and pilgrims. A twenty-year-old young man called Christopher Damianides and 42 other Christians worked for three months there to erect new buildings. (Christopher had come a long way from Kazakhstan on hearing of the fame of the saint, although he was very ill. And Mother Helena had healed him after putting him on a strict fast.)

The hermitage was built from wood. So to reconstruct it they had to use huge trees up to 50 metres high. After the completion of the works, Mother Helena called the Christians together, thanked them and said that the next day "Christopher will be able to leave". The following day, however, she asked him to stay, because "they would have a great temptation". And indeed, they had many problems from the local Forestry department, because the trees had been cut down without its permission.

After the work was done, some of the faithful offered to Matushka that they use a tree in order to construct a fence around the hermitage.

"No," she said, "we shall not cut down another tree. But if God wills this work, He Himself will send it us."

That night there was a terrible storm, and the next morning everyone saw to their amazement that a fir-tree of enormous proportions had been uprooted and stretched from the water right to the boundary of the hermitage. So, in accordance with the saint's prophecy, the Lord Himself had sent wood to fence it round, in a manner that exceeded human and natural strength.

They had also build a little chapel inside the hermitage. When it was completed, Matushka called the young Christopher, together with Theodore Boukharides, and sent them to the village, saying: 'There where the Georgians have built a school, there is a buried church dedicated to Saints Constantine and Helena. You excavate it and you will find a hidden icon." The two young men obediently dug for the church, but could not find anything, and so set off back to the hermitage. Matushka Helena sent them there again, this time with clear and accurate instructions (how many steps to the right and to the left). The young man dug, and this time they found a big icon of the All-Holy Mother of God. While they were bringing it to the hermitage, Matushka, informed "from above" about the discovery, went to meet them holding the honourable Cross and wonderworking holy water. She took the icon, kissed it and put it in the chapel. Then, in the presence of about 50 faithful, the church was filled with a wonderful fragrance. "Come, my children," she said, "come and see the grace of the Holy Spirit."

Through the grace of God, Mother Helena knew who were coming to visit her; she called them by their Christian names and said who would be received and who not. She did not receive those with little faith or those burdened by mortal sins.

Once (according to the witness of the monk Fr. Luke Panides) she was visited by a mother with a sick child, who was carrying some food. Matushka did not receive her. Later, when asked she explained that "all of them in the family are unbelievers". Another time, she told her visitors to sit in a room containing the icon of the Lord not-made-with-hands. While they all saw that the eyes in the Lord's face were open, one woman saw that they were closed.

"Why is that, Gerontissa?" asked one man.

"John," she replied, "I am not hindering her, but the Lord Himself, because she practices magic."

Mrs. Despoina Kalaitzides got to know Mother Helena in 1965 together with a relative of hers. Matushka – who had not seen them before – said to her:

"You are the daughter of Alexandra and you are very like her. I see your father Panagiotes dressed in green."

Before Despoina and her relative, the hermitage had been visited by two Russian women, bringing some food. However, Blessed Helena had again not received them. Later Matushka Nina told Despoina and her relative that the Russian women had a sick child and on an earlier visit Matushka Helena had advised them to keep the fasts of the Church in order that the child should be healed. And indeed, the child was healed. However, "the Russians easily forget", and since they were careless, in the end the child fell ill again. And she did not receive the food because it had been stolen from a state institution where they worked.

One evening a bear started groaning mournfully outside the hermitage of the saint. Matushka was frightened at the beginning. However, the cries of the animal forced her to interrupt her prayer. Then she saw that the bear's paw was wounded. The blessed one plucked up courage, came closer to the bear and bound up the wound.

A few days later the bear returned peacefully, holding in its paws some maize. Matushka received the animal's gift gratefully, but when she understood that it had taken it from some farm, doing injustice in this way to some unsuspecting farmer, she "scolded" the bear and showed him a piece of wood, indicating in this way that in the future it should bring her firewood. From then on the animal brought firewood, demonstrating in this way his gratitude to the saint.

When sick people came to Matushka, she would counsel them to fast and pray, "for this kind cometh not out except by prayer and fasting" (Matthew 17.21). And since there were no priests to read the Gospel, she would read the Gospel, sprinkling the sick with "holy water" and anointing them with oil from the lampada of the Mother of God. And in accordance with the faith of the sick people, the Lord performed miracles. From the sick she demanded only faith in the power of God and a Christian life thenceforth. At that time there were many "healers" in the Soviet Union. When the sick could not go to the hermitage themselves, their relatives sent their clothes there so that Matushka should bless them.

Like a true nun, Mother Helena had prepared her own grave while she was still alive, outside the hermitage. The simple people, during her lifetime, would take earth from the grave and it would work miracles.

One of the first to be healed through the prayers of Mother Helena was "Katya from Krasnodar", who suffered from epilepsy. After her healing Katya stayed at the hermitage and became a nun with the name Catherine.

Olga Simeonides witnesses that when she was newly married and her son George was one year old, she fell mentally ill. She was oppressed, didn't want to be in the house, feared lights and people, etc. With her mother and husband she went to many psychiatrists, with no result. Then a lecturer in psychiatry who was probably a believer discreetly recommended that the prayers of the Church for driving out demons be read. These prayers also did not work, but they did make the condition evident: Olga produced symptoms of demon-possession, and attacked the priests (of the official Georgian Church). Finally her mother in despair began to visit "magicians" and "healers". At one such visit to a well-known medium, God had mercy on her: the medium, compelled by the grace of God, told her:

"Sit down and listen. You have to find a woman; only she will be able to heal your daughter. She has seven Gospels. At the third your daughter's illness will be loosed."

"Since the wretched husband and parents of Olga did not know where to go, they brought the sick woman to her house. For the next month Olga remained lying in a dark room, wrapped in a bed sheet, with absolutely no food or water. There was an icon of the Deisis in the room. One day she heard a sound. Starting up, the sick woman saw a nun standing in front of the icon.

"I am sorry for you," she said. "Give me your hand, so that I can lift you up. You have twelve days left to live."

Olga found the courage to stretch out her hand, and hardly had the unknown nun touched her than she felt a supernatural power go through her. Her strength returned and she was completely healed!

When this miracle became known, the thoughts of all turned to "Matushka Helena of Chin". Olga visited the hermitage to thank her, and recognized in the face of the blessed one the unknown nun who had healed her. Then the saint told her about the satanic bonds of magic, with which, with the permission of God, she had been bound.

"Don't seek to find out who was responsible," she said, "because then you will die from sorrow."

The wife of a very high-ranking Soviet general fell mentally ill. No psychiatrists could help her, so her husband took her – at great risk to himself, since people of his rank were supposed to be atheists – to the hermitage of Chin. Matushka Helena healed the woman. Then the general offered to bring electricity to the hermitage. Matushka refused"

"We are nuns," she said. "Wax and oil are sufficient for us."

The general then offered to bring water from the sides of the hill into the depths of the ravine by aqueduct. She accepted this gift.

Matushka Helena was also a prophetess. In 1955 Christopher Damianides, aged 18, was told by his parents to go to Matushka to ask her whether there would be a war.

"No," she replied. "There will be no war."

"And how will the situation develop?" asked Christopher.

"The eighth leader [of the Soviet Union] is called Michael [i.e. Michael Gorbachev, the eighth Soviet leader since Lenin]. He will be young and good-looking. He will change the situation. However, there will come great poverty. But finally good times will come…"

Many Pontiac Greeks living in the region wanted to return to Greece. She warned them that they must go only to the Old Calendar Church:

"In Greece there is the new calendar. Don't go to the churches where it is followed… If Greece returns to the Old Calendar, it will triumph. Otherwise it will perish."

Matushka Helena died in 1977 (her sister Nina died between the years 1957 and 1959). A Russian-style "open" wooden church has been erected over her grave, and a monk called Boris lives at the hermitage. Her relics have not been uncovered yet. But the earth from her grave is refreshed by a fragrant myrrh which, especially at night, makes the whole area fragrant. And the saint once appeared in a dream to the person who buried her and said:

"Don't move me, for the oil has reached my eyes…"[91]

Nun Helena was not the last saint of the region. In the early 1980s a small secret community of monastics was discovered in the high mountains about 60 kilometres from Sukhumi by the KGB. 18 monastics managed to take shelter in a cave. The pursuers in a helicopter threw a cask full of burning liquid into the entrance and set it on fire. All those hiding in the cave perished. Their names were: Irina, Maria, Eudocia, Ulyana, John, Gregory, Basil, Andrew, Stephen, and others.[92]

[91] Antonios Markou, "I Osia Eleni tou Kavkasou", Koropi, Attica, 2001 (in Greek).
[92] Professor Demetrius Pospielovsky, "Russian persecution ignored by the West", *The Globe and Mail*, Toronto, October 1, 1983.

## *GREEK ZEALOTS AND ECUMENISTS*

Although persecution against the Greek Old Calendarists was less fierce than against the True Orthodox in Russia, and less than it had been in the 1930s or 1951-52, it still existed in the early 1970s. "The following are only some of the many means used by the Greek regime and the official Church to persecute Old Calendarists: a) priests of the Old Calendarist Church are deprived of the elementary rights accorded to even non-Orthodox Greek ecclesiastics (e.g. Catholics, Protestants, Jews). Their sacramental acts are considered by the state to be null – thus thousands of marriages are declared invalid and thousands of infants are deemed 'natural' (unbaptized). b) Old Calendar women cannot inherit from their husbands. c) Old Calendar churches are constantly being forcibly closed. d) Old Calendar clerics are frequently violently removed from their posts by the civil authorities at the request of the official church. e) Old Calendarist clerics of Greek nationality abroad are refused a passport signifying their clerical status, although such passports are given to Catholic and Protestant clerics and to Jewish rabbis. The sacraments (marriages, baptisms) performed by them abroad are not recognized by the civil authorities. This is done to intimidate Greeks abroad not to adhere to the Old Calendar Church, and is a clear infringement of the liberty of conscience of those Orthodox desiring to uphold Orthodox Tradition."[93]

In spite of these persecutions, "by 1973, the Auxentian Synod had ten bishops, 123 churches in Greece, thirty-nine monasteries and convents, several charitable organizations, numerous periodicals, and most of the traditional Orthodox faithful in Greece."[94] In 1975, according to a new calendarist estimate, "of the two Old Calendarist groups, the followers of the later Metropolitan Chrysostom of Florina have about 120 parishes, perhaps 70-80 monks and more than 600 nuns; the followers of the late Archbishop Matthew of Keratea have about 50 parishes, 150 monks and 500 nuns. But these figures may well be too low."[95] Other sources indicate that in the later 1970s there were about 50,000 Old Calendarists, with about a third of the 1200 monks on the Holy Mountain being zealots who refused to commemorate the Ecumenical Patriarch.[96]

By comparison, the Romanian Old Calendarists were much more numerous at this time: about one million faithful led by three bishops, Glicherie, Evloghie and Silvestru. There were 12 hieromonks, about 45 married priests and 5 deacons. There were also two monasteries, Slătioara, with 80 monks, and another with 25. There were two convents with 100 and 50 nuns each, and a skete, Dobru with 35 nuns, besides some 100 or so nuns living in the parish churches."[97]

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[93] *The Old Calendarist,* N 11, November 1/14, 1971.
[94] Lardas, op. cit., p. 30.
[95] *Eastern Churches Review,* vol. VII, № 1, Spring, 1975, p. 85.
[96] *Greece: A Portrait,* Research and Publicity Center, KEDE ltd., Athens, 1979, p. 159; Bishop Callistus of Diokleia, "Wolves and monks: life on the Holy Mountain today", *Sobornost*, vol. 5, № 2, 1983, p. 62.
[97] "The Present State of the Church of the Old Calendar in Romania", *Orthodox Christian Witness*, September 25 / October 8, 1978; Bishop Ambrose of Methone, personal communication, November 10, 2005.

Meanwhile, the new calendarist Greeks were going still further than the Soviet Russians by extending their "eucharistic hospitality" even to the Protestants. Thus in 1971 Patriarch Athenagoras told a group of thirty American and five Greek priests: "And what is taking place today? A great spirit of love is spreading abroad over the Christians of the East and the West. Already we love one another… already in America you give communion to many from the holy chalice, and you do well! And I also here, when Catholics and Protestants come and ask to receive communion, I offer them the holy cup! And in Rome the same thing is happening, and in England, and in France. Already it is coming by itself!"[98]

Now the lifting of the anathemas in 1965 had caused the majority of monasteries, sketes and dependencies of Mount Athos to cease commemorating the patriarch. However, on November 13, 1971 a special session of the Holy Assembly, the governing body of Mount Athos, resolved that "on the issue of resuming the commemoration of the Ecumenical Patriarchate, each Holy Monastery, as a self-governing entity, is to remain free to choose a course of action in accordance with its conscience". [99] However, although Esphigmenou, along with other monasteries, remained faithful to this resolution, the abbots of St. Paul's and Xenophontou monastery were removed and replaced by hand-picked appointees.

In 1972 Esphigmenou raised the flag "Orthodoxy or Death" over the monastery in protest against the joint prayer service held by Athenagoras and the Pope, and broke communion with the other monasteries. However, in July Athenagoras died, and hopes were raised that his successor, Demetrius, would abandon his predecessor's uniatism and return to Orthodoxy. But these hopes were dashed when, at his enthronement speech on July 5/18, the new patriarch affirmed his commitment to Ecumenism and the WCC, and spoke about "the pressing need to initiate dialogues first of all with Islam, and then with the other great monotheistic religions."[100] And later that year Demetrius addressed the Mohammedans on one of their feasts: "The great God whose children we all are, all of us who believe in and worship him, wishes us to be saved and to be brothers. He wishes this to be so even though we belong to different religions. In these religions, however, we have learned both to recognize the holy God as the beginning and end of all, to love each other and to think only good things – which things let us practise towards each other."[101]

This did not prevent the Sacred Community of the Holy Mountain from issuing an encyclical to the monasteries on July 8/21, instructing them to resume the commemoration of the Ecumenical Patriarch. "A new climate has been established between the Holy Mountain and the Ecumenical Patriarchate," the encyclical stated.

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[98] *Orthodoxos Typos*, 13 July, 1979 (G).

[99] "A Rejoinder to a Challenge of the Legitimacy of the Orthodox Monastic Brotherhood of the Holy Monastery of Esphigmenou", orthodox-synod@yahoogroups.com, January 29, 2003.

[100] *Episkepsis*, № 59, July 25, 1972, p. 6 (G); *Eastern Churches Review*, vol. IV, № 2, Autumn, 1972, p. 175.

[101] The Zealot Monks of Mount Athos, *Phoni ex Agiou Orous (Voice from the Holy Mountain)*, 1988, p. 73; *Ekklesiastiki Alitheia (Ecclesiastical Truth)*, № 70, 1972 (G).

"With the death of Patriarch Athenagoras, the reasons which led certain holy monasteries to break off the commemoration of their bishop's name now exist no longer."

Nevertheless, even after this statement and the visit to the Holy Mountain of an exarchate from the Ecumenical Patriarchate in September, seven monasteries still refused to commemorate the patriarch. And one of them, Esphigmenou, began to commemorate Archbishop Auxentius instead.[102]

In September, 1973, another exarchate arrived on the Holy Mountain. It condemned Esphigmenou's rebellion. Then, "on 11 March 1974 the Ecumenical Patriarch wrote to the Holy Community, announcing his decision. Penalties were imposed on thirteen monks. These included Archimandrite Athanasius, Abbot of Esphigmenou, the two epitropoi and the secretary of the monastery, who were to be expelled immediately from the Mountain... Archimandrite Eudocimus, Abbot of Xenophontos, was to be deposed and expelled from his monastery, but permitted to live in some other Athonite House. The abbots of the two other communities – Archimandrites Dionysius of Grigoriou and Andrew of St. Paul's – were to be deposed unless within two months they resumed the commemoration of the Patriarch's name…

"On the arrival of the Patriarch's letter, the police cut the telephone line to Esphigmenou and installed a guard outside the monastery. Meanwhile the monks kept the gates closed and hung from the walls a large black banner inscribed 'Orthodoxy or Death'. They warned the civil governor that they would resist any attempt to effect a forcible entry. In a declaration smuggled to the outside world, they stated that they continued to regard themselves as canonically subject to the Ecumenical Patriarchate, but did not recognize the present occupant of the Patriarchal throne, since 'he is an enemy of Orthodoxy'."[103]

The monks of Esphigmenou were encouraged in their stand by a great miracle worked by the Holy Martyr Agathangelus, a monk of Esphigmenou. At the most critical moment in the struggle, the monks on entering the sanctuary were met with a great fragrant cloud. On examination, they found that the cloud was coming from the relics of St. Agathangelus; and they took this to mean that the saint was approving of their struggle against the greatest heresy of the age…

In May, 1975 the WCC published an agreed statement of the Faith and Order Commission entitled *One Baptism, One Eucharist and a Mutually Recognised Ministry*, proclaiming a thoroughly Protestant doctrine of ecclesial and sacramental unity. As the title suggests, this document was aimed at the mutual recognition by the churches of each other's sacraments. For example: "Our baptismal unity in Jesus Christ constitutes a call to the churches to overcome their divisions and achieve full visible union" (p. 10). And "the full recognition by churches of each other's baptisms

[102] *Eastern Churches Review*, vol. IV, № 1, Spring, 1973, pp. 72-73.
[103] *Eastern Churches Review*, vol. IV, № 1, Spring, 1974, pp. 109-110.

as the one baptism into Christ should be possible for all when Jesus Christ has been confessed as Lord by the candidate… and when baptism has been performed with water 'in the name of the Father , the Son and the Holy Spirit'" (p. 16). It should be remembered that the WCC included sects which deny the Divinity of Christ, and that none of the member-churches except the Orthodox (and not even all of them) baptised in the apostolic manner with full threefold immersion.

The document also included a theologically incoherent doctrine of the transformation of the bread and the wine in the Eucharist, and the extraordinary statement that "the churches should test their liturgies in the light of the eucharistic agreement recently obtained" (p. 27) – as if the Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom needed revision in the light of Protestant theology!

The Orthodox could hardly claim not to be committed to this document's doctrines, for one of its chief architects was the Russian Protopresbyter Vitaly Borovoy, and none of the Churches disowned him. Moreover, it was a revision of previous statements "in the light of responses received from the churches" – including, presumably, from the Orthodox churches.

In the same year of 1975, Archbishop Athenagoras of Thyateira and Great Britain published, with the explicit blessing and authorisation of Patriarch Demetrius, his *Thyateira Confession*, which expressed the novel idea that the Church is a house without walls which anyone can enter freely. And he wrote: "Orthodox Christians believe that the following Churches have valid and true Priesthood or Orders. The Orthodox, the Roman Catholic, the Ethiopian, the Copto-Armenian and the Anglican. The Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople, the Patriarchate of Alexandria, the Patriarchate of Jerusalem, the Patriarchate of Romania and the Church of Cyprus half a century ago declared officially that the Anglican Church has valid Orders by dispensation and that means that Anglican Bishops, Priests and Deacons can perform valid sacraments as can those of the Roman Catholic Church."[104] Athenagoras also asserted that "the idea that Masonry is a religion is mistaken"…

When Metropolitan Philaret criticized *The Thyateira Confession*[105], Athenagoras responded with a fierce attack on ROCOR, and declared: "Of course the door of the Church is Holy Baptism which the Orthodox Church has recognised as being validly administered by Roman Catholics, the Copts, the Armenians, the Old Catholics and Anglicans, the Lutherans, the Methodists and some other Christian groups."[106]

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[104] Athenagoras (Kokkinakis), *The Thyateira Confession,* London, 1975, p. 61.

[105] Metropolitan Philaret of New York, "An Epistle to the Primates of the Holy Churches of God and the Most Reverend Orthodox Bishops on the 'Thyateira Confession'", *Orthodox Christian Witness*, May 17/30, 1976; "The Thyateira Confession", *Orthodox Christian Witness*, February 23 / March 7, 1976. See also Holy Transfiguration Monastery, Boston, *A Reply to Archbishop Athenagoras.* See also

[106] Athenagoras (Kokkinakis), *Ecclesiological Problems: "Church Beyond Boundaries".*

Again, at the WCC's General Assembly at Nairobi in 1975, the Orthodox delegates, having signed an agreement to recognize the sacraments of the non-Orthodox delegates, had declared that "the Orthodox do not expect the other Christians to be converted to Orthodoxy in its historic and cultural reality of the past and the present and to become members of the Orthodox Church" – which gave the lie to their excuse that they were participating in the ecumenical movement "to witness to the non-Orthodox".[107]

Some residual opposition to ecumenism remained in some of the Local Churches – especially in Greece, where the opposition of Esphigmenou kept the issue high on the agenda. Thus, as Archimandrite (later Bishop) Callistus (Ware) reported, "during May, 1978, after visiting the Ecumenical Patriarch, Dr. Potter and Archbishop Scott, the Chairman of the Central Committee of the WCC, went to Athens for discussions there with the Synodical Commission on Inter-Orthodox and Inter-Christian Relations. It seems that the explanations offered from the side of the WCC totally failed to meet the Greek Orthodox objections. In an interview with the *New York Times*, Archbishop Seraphim of Athens stated that the Church of Greece was now considering withdrawal from membership in the WCC…

"Orthodox elsewhere are thinking along the same lines as Archbishop Seraphim. Speaking to the Clergy Conference of the Greek Archdiocese on 7 November, 1978, Archbishop Athenagoras of Thyateira and Great Britain likewise argued that Orthodoxy should withdraw from full membership of the WCC. In his view the Orthodox Church ought to have the same relation with the WCC as the Roman Catholic Church has with the Orthodox, that is to say, should send observers to WCC meetings and participate in discussions, but without voting and without being organic members of the World Council."[108]

In April, 1980 another warning against ecumenism was issued by the Fathers of Mount Athos, who since the return of Vatopedi in 1975 were now all solidly Old Calendar, though most remained in communion with the Ecumenical Patriarch. And yet high-level negotiations between Orthodox and Catholics went ahead on the islands of Patmos and Rhodes in May and June of 1980. During these talks, news came – hastily denied by the Vatican – that Pope John-Paul II had pronounced papal infallibility to be "not negotiable". And on June 5, the day after the ending of the talks in Rhodes, the Pope declared that papal infallibility was "the key itself for certainty in professing and proclaiming the faith…"[109]

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[107] "Orthodoxy and the Ecumenical Movement", *Orthodox Christian Witness*, October 27 / November 9, 1997, p. 2.

[108] Ware, "Orthodoxy and the World Council of Churches", *Sobornost*, vol. 1, № 1, 1979, pp. 78-80. However, when Fr. Callistus himself, a cleric of the Ecumenical Patriarchate, served at ROCOR's Annunciation Convent in London, the Old Calendarist Archimandrite Cyprian of Fili sent a letter of protest to the ROCOR Synod (June 17, 1975). (Psarev, op. cit., p. 4)

[109] *Newsletter,* Department of Public and Foreign Relations of the Synod of Bishops of ROCOR, January-March, 1981, pp. 2-4.

## *THE THIRD ALL-EMIGRATION COUNCIL*

In 1974 the Third All-Emigration Council of ROCOR took place in the monastery of the Holy Trinity in Jordanville, New York. Just as the First Council, held at Karlovtsy in 1921, had defined the relationship of ROCOR to the Bolshevik regime and the Romanov dynasty; and the Second Council, held in Belgrade in 1938, defined her relationship to the Church inside Russia; so the Third Council tried to define her relationship to the ecumenical and dissident movements. As Metropolitan Philaret, president of the Council, said in his keynote address: "First of all, the Council must declare not only for the Russian flock, but for the entire Church, its concept of the Church; to reveal the dogma of the Church… The Council must determine the place our Church Abroad holds within contemporary Orthodoxy, among the other 'so-called' churches. We say 'so-called' for though now they often speak of many 'churches', the Church of Christ is single and One."[110]

There was much to discuss. In the last decade the apostatic influence of the ecumenical movement had broadened and deepened, and Metropolitan Philaret, had assumed a leading role in the struggle against it through his "Sorrowful Epistles". Under the influence of this leadership, many non-Russians, such as the Greek American Monastery of the Holy Transfiguration in Boston, had sought refuge in ROCOR, and this movement had been strengthened by the application of the two Greek Old Calendarist Synods to enter into communion with her. ROCOR was no longer an exclusively Russian jurisdiction in the make-up of her members, and she could no longer be seen as simply an outpost of Russian Orthodox anti-communism. She was a multi-ethnic, missionary Church fighting the main heresies of the age on a number of fronts throughout the world.

However, such a vision of ROCOR was not shared by all her hierarchs. Some saw the isolation of ROCOR from other local Churches as necessitated, not so much by the struggle against ecumenism, as by the need to preserve *Russianness* among the Russian émigrés. It was not that the preservation of Russianness as such was not an undoubted good: the problem arose when it hindered the missionary witness of the Church to non-Russian believers. Such phyletistic tendencies inevitably led to a loss of Church consciousness in relation to ecumenism, and to a feeling that ROCOR was closer to Russians of the MP, ecumenist though they might be, than to True Orthodox Christians of Greek or French or American origin.[111]

Another cause of division was the stricter attitude that ROCOR was now being forced to adopt towards "World Orthodoxy", the Local Orthodox Churches that participated in the ecumenical movement. Most of the hierarchs had passively

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[110] Third All-Diaspora Council, 1974, Protocol 1, August 26 / September 8, Synodal Archives, p. 2; quoted in Nun Vassa (Larin) "'Glory be to God, Who did not Abandon His Church', The Self-Awareness of ROCOR at the Third All-Diaspora Council of 1974", http://www.russianorthodoxchurch.ws/01newstructure/pagesen/articles/svassasobor.htm, p. 2.

[111] See Eugene Pavlenko, "The Heresy of Phyletism: History and the Present", *Vertograd-Inform*, № 13, November, 1999.

acquiesced in Metropolitan Philaret's "Sorrowful Epistles", and in the union with the Greek Old Calendarists. But they began to stir when the consequences of this were spelled out by the "zealots" in ROCOR: no further communion with the new calendarists, the Serbs and Jerusalem. The unofficial leader of this group of bishops was Archbishop Anthony of Geneva, who was supported by Bishop Laurus of Manhattan, Archbishop Philotheus of Germany and Bishop Paul of Stuttgart.[112] His main opponents were Metropolitan Philaret, Archbishops Anthony of Los Angeles and Averky of Syracuse, Bishop Gregory (Grabbe) [113] and, especially, the Greek-American Monastery of the Holy Transfiguration in Boston.

Archbishop Anthony of Geneva was a powerful hierarch who had already once apostasized to the Moscow Patriarchate.[114] He continually proclaimed that the MP was a true Church[115]. Moreover, he concelebrated frequently with the heretics of "World Orthodoxy", and even, in 1986, ordered his Paris clergy to concelebrate with the new calendarists in Greece, and not with the Old Calendarists. He was a thorn in the side of Metropolitan Philaret until the latter's death in 1985… In his address to the Council, entitled "Our Church in the Modern World", he declared: "By the example of our First Hierarchs [Anthony and Anastasy] we must carefully preserve those fine threads which bind us with the Orthodox world. Under no circumstances must we isolate ourselves, seeing around us, often imagined, heretics and schismatics. Through gradual self-isolation we will fall into the extremism which our metropolitans wisely avoided, we will reject that middle, royal path which until now our Church has travelled… By isolating ourselves, we will embark upon the path of sectarianism, fearing everyone and everything, we will become possessed with paranoia."[116]

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[112] Nun Vassa, op. cit.

[113] "In his report to Metropolitan Philaret on 7 December of 1972, Archpriest George Grabbe, who then headed the Synod's External Affairs Department, protested against Bishops Nikon and Laurus having united in prayer with Archbishop Iakovos during the visit of the relics of St. Nicholas to the Greek Church in Flushing, NY. His protest was motivated on the basis of determinations of the ROCOR Councils of Bishops of 1967 and 1971 that its clergy must by all means avoid prayerful communion with hierarchs who were ecumenists, and even more so because ROCOR had accepted clerics who had left these other churches for 'dogmatic reasons'." (Psarev, op. cit., p. 4).

[114] "In 1945, being in Serbia, he went over to the MP and waited for a Soviet passport so as to go to the USSR, but the Soviet authorities took their time with the passport, bestowing on him in the meantime the rank of archimandrite [through Patriarch Alexis I]. But, fed up with waiting for permission to return, [in 1949] the future bishop left for Switzerland to his brother Bishop Leontius, where he was reunited with ROCOR, having received a penance for his joining the MP." (Kirillov, May 15, 2006 http://elmager.livejournal.com/66190.html?thread=283278; Bernard le Caro, "A Short Biography of Archbishop Antony (Bartoshevich) of Geneva and Western Europe (+1993)", http://www.orthodoxengland.org.uk/vl_antony_b.pdf). However, to get out to the West was almost impossible at that time without the cooperation of the Soviet authorities – which cooperation was never given unless the Soviets were sure that the person in question was working for them…

[115] Witness of the present writer. Bishop Lazarus, too, believed that the MP had grace. In an interview with *Orthodoxy America*, he claimed that this was the view of that branch of the Catacomb Church to which he belonged. However, he had to believe that there was grace in the MP in order to justify his claim that his ordination in the MP was valid – a claim that he always strenuously asserted.

[116] Archbishop Anthony particularly resented the influence of the Greek Old Calendarists and the Greeks within ROCOR. As he wrote to Protopresbyter George Grabbe after the Council: "To trail along behind the Greek Old Calendarists, taking Fr. Panteleimon for a prophet – this I cannot do.

This somewhat hysterical appeal not to separate from the World Orthodox at just the point when they were embarking upon "super-ecumenism" was criticised by Fr. George Grabbe: "The report does not mention to the degree necessary, maybe, that life goes on, and the sickness of ecumenism deepens and widens more and more. Condescension, oikonomia, must under different circumstances be applied differently, and to different degrees. In doses too great it can betray the Truth." Then Archbishop Anthony of Los Angeles recalled that "we have many Greek [Old Calendarist] parishes. Our concelebration with the new calendarists was very bitter for them."[117]

The leader of one of the Greek Old Calendarist parishes within ROCOR, Fr. Panagiotes Carras, sent an appeal to the Synod of Bishops on August 24, 1974 on behalf of all "non-Russian monasteries, parishes, and laity of ROCOR", in which he called on the ecumenists to be labelled as heretics who had lost the Holy Spirit and who should be subjected to the canonical sanctions that apply to heretics and schismatics. There was no response to this at the time. But nine years later, in 1983, the ROCOR Council of Bishops did anathematize ecumenism in terms that were dictated, it appears, by the Greeks in ROCOR.[118]

Also discussed at the Council was the phenomenon known as "the dissident movement". This arose in the second half of the 1960s, as détente developed between the Communist and Capitalist superpowers. It affected both the political sphere (the works of such figures as Sakharov and Solzhenitsyn) and the religious sphere (Solzhenitsyn again, Bishop Hermogenes of Kaluga, the priests Yeshliman, Yakunin and Dudko, the layman Boris Talantov).

Unknown at the time was the adoption of a new long-range global strategy by the Soviet leadership, in which the dissident movement was planned to play an important role. Thus in a memo to the CIA dated 1978 Anatoliy Golitsyn wrote: "At the time of the adoption of the long-range strategy in the period 1958 to 1960, there was strong internal opposition to the Soviet régime from dissatisfied workers, collective farmers, intellectuals, clergy, Ukrainian, Latvian, Lithuanian and Jewish nationalists, etc. These oppositionists did not call themselves 'dissidents' and nor did the KGB call them 'dissidents'.

"On the contrary, the KGB and the Party referred to them as 'enemies of the régime'… The KGB was instructed to adopt new methods to deal with this

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From my point, I am deeply convinced that this would be a betrayal of the Church. For you and me who used to have such universal teachers as Metropolitan Anthony and Archbishop Gavriil… Now even though we see the absurdities committed by the Greek Old Calendarists, we are still trying to accommodate and placate them, though we ourselves are slipping into a sect, cutting ourselves off from universal unity" (Psarev, op. cit., p. 8).

[117] Protocol № 4 of the All-Diaspora Council, August 29 / September 11, 1974; Synodal Archives, p. 4; Nun Vassa, op. cit.

[118] Psarev, op. cit., p. 8

opposition, based on the experience of the GPU (the Soviet political police) under Dzerzhinsky in the 1920s…

"This entailed the creation of a false opposition in the USSR and other countries… The current 'dissident movement' is just such a false opposition designed and created by the KGB…

"The main objectives which the Soviet rulers are trying to achieve through the 'dissident movement' are as follows:

"(a) To confuse, neutralise and dissolve the *true* internal political opposition in the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics;

"(b) To prevent the West from reaching the genuine internal opposition in the USSR by introducing to the West a false KGB-controlled opposition. This explains the easy access of the Western media to the alleged 'dissidents';

"(c) To influence the foreign policy of the United States through the 'dissidents' in the interests of the Communist long-term strategy and exploit this issue in the strategy's final phase."[119]

Golitsyn was talking mainly about political dissidents. Nevertheless, it may be that some of the church dissidents, too, were, if not signed-up agents, at any rate naïve and unwitting tools in the hands of the enemies of the faith, who permitted all their contacts with the ROCOR because they foresaw the corrosive effect such contacts would have.

Two main streams were discernible in the movement, which may be called, recalling the debates of the nineteenth-century intelligentsia, the Westernisers and the Slavophiles.[120] The Westernisers were mainly concerned to correct abuses within the Church, to re-establish freedom of conscience and freedom of expression. They sought and received much support in the West, and were in turn much influenced by modern western modes of thought, especially – and in this they departed from traditionally Orthodox modes of thought – Ecumenism. The Slavophiles were less well received and understood in the West. Their main emphasis was on the restoration of traditional Russianness – Russian religion, Russian art and architecture, Russian culture in all its forms, which Soviet culture had so damaged and distorted.

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[119] Golitsyn, *The Perestroika Deception*, London and New York: Edward Harle, 1995, p. 175.

[120] See Roman Redlikh, "Rossia, Evropa i Real'nij Sotsializm" (Russia, Europe and Real Socialism), *Grani (Edges)*, 1986, pp. 265-289 ®; Alexander Yanov, *The Russian Challenge*, Oxford: Blackwells, 1987, chs. 2-4; Victor Aksiuchits, "Zapadniki i Pochvenniki Segodnia" (Westernisers and Traditionalists Today), *Vestnik Khristianskogo Informatsionnogo Tsentra (Herald of the Christian Information Centre)*, № 30, September 22, 1989.

The two streams were not always sharply differentiated and could fuse together in the thought and activity of a single man. Thus Alexander Solzhenitsyn, though usually considered to be a Slavophile, nevertheless shared many of the characteristics of the westernizing dissidents, not only in his human rights activity, but also in his Ecumenism. And, purified of their heterodox elements, both streams could be said to tend (unconsciously as yet) towards the True Orthodox Church, which remained more radical and still more courageous in Her confession than the dissidents and more truly representative of the best of Old Russia than the Slavophiles.

The dissident movement within the Church began, among the clergy, with the 1965 open letter of the Priests Nicholas Yeshliman and Gleb Yakunin to President Podgorny, in which they protested against the subservience of the Church to the State, particularly in not resisting the Khrushchev persecution, in giving control of the parishes to the State-controlled dvadsatsky, in the handing over of lists of those baptized to the local authorities, in not letting children and adolescents under 18 participate in church life, and in ordaining only those candidates to the episcopate and priesthood who were pleasing to the Council for Religious Affairs. This letter was ignored by the patriarchate, and in 1966 both priests were forbidden from serving.

Among the laity, the most significant dissident, as we have seen, was the philosopher Boris Talantov, who was imprisoned for exposing the activities of the Kirov Bishop John in the closing of churches and suppression of believers. He was slandered publicly on the BBC by Metropolitan Nicodemus of Leningrad, and was eventually sent to prison in Kirov, where he died in 1971. In an article entitled "Sergianism, or adaptation to atheism", which had the subtitle "The Leaven of Herod", Talantov denounced Metropolitan Sergius' 1927 declaration as a betrayal of the Church, and the MP as "a secret agent of worldwide antichristianity". Sergianism had not only not "saved" the Church, but, on the contrary, had assisted the loss of true ecclesiastical freedom and turned the Church administration into the obedient tool of the atheist authorities. "Metropolitan Sergius," he wrote, "by his adaptation and lies saved nobody and nothing except himself." And in another samizdat article entitled "The Secret Participation of the Moscow Patriarchate in the struggle of the CPSS against the Orthodox Christian Church" he wrote: "The Moscow Patriarchate and the majority of bishops participate in organized activities of the atheist authorities directed to the closing of churches, the limitation of the spreading of the faith and its undermining in our country… In truth the atheist leaders of the Russian people and the princes of the Church have gathered together against the Lord and His Christ".[121]

In 1972, Alexander Solzhenitsyn wrote an open "Lenten Letter" to Patriarch Pimen, describing the patriarchate as being "ruled dictatorially by atheists – a sight never before seen in two millenia!" "The Russian Church," he wrote, "expresses its

[121] Talantov, in "Tserkov' Katakombnaia na zemle Rossijskoj (III)" (The Catacomb Church in the Russian Land (III), *Pravoslavnaia Zhizn' (Orthodox Life)*, № 12 (635), December, 2002, pp. 10-11 ®.

concern about any evil in distant Africa, while it never has anything at all to say about things which are wrong here at home." And he went on: "By what reasoning is it possible to convince oneself that the planned destruction of the spirit and body of the church under the guidance of atheists is the best way of preserving it? Preserving it for whom? Certainly not for Christ. Preserving it by what means? By falsehood? But after the falsehood by whose hands are the holy sacraments to be celebrated?"[122]

Solzhenitsyn's appeal "not to live by the lie" was seen by some to lead logically to the adoption of a catacomb existence for the Church. Thus Fr. Sergius Zheludkov replied: "What are we to do in such a situation? Should we say: all or nothing? Should we try to go underground, which in the present system is unthinkable? Or should we try somehow to accept the system and for the present use those opportunities that are permitted?" [123] However, Solzhenitsyn himself neither belonged to the Catacomb Church nor even believed in Her existence. And this position eminently suited those hierarchs of ROCOR, such as Anthony of Geneva, whose attitude to events in Russia was dictated as much by political as by spiritual or ecclesiological considerations.[124] They were sincere anti-communists and despised the kowtowing of the MP hierarchs to communism, but would not have dreamed of denying that the MP was a true Church. The position of these hierarchs was threatened by the anti-ecumenist zeal of Metropolitan Philaret, Archbishop Averky and the Boston monastery. But the expulsion of Solzhenitsyn to the West in 1974 presented them with an opportunity. Archbishop Anthony promptly brought Solzhenitsyn to the Council in Jordanville, where he created a sensation by his rejection of the zealot view.

Then Anthony himself read a report calling on ROCOR to support the dissidents, in spite of the fact that they were ecumenists and in the MP. He was countered by Archbishop Anthony of Los Angeles, who, while respecting the courage of the dissidents, objected to a recognition that would devalue the witness of the true catacomb confessors. Also, Metropolitan Philaret moved for an official statement that the MP was graceless. According to the witness of a seminarian present at the Council, the majority of bishops and delegates would have supported such a motion. However, at the last minute the metropolitan was persuaded not to proceed with the motion on the grounds that it would have caused a schism.[125]

Another important dissident was the Moscow priest Fr. Demetrius Dudko, who conducted open meetings in his church that attracted many and influenced many more. Unlike Solzhenitsyn, he knew of the Catacomb Church, and wrote of it in relatively flattering terms: "We all recognize Patriarch Tikhon and we look on Patriarch Sergius' [acts] as a betrayal of the Church's interests to please the

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[122] Ellis, *The Russian Orthodox Church*, London: Allen Croom, 1986, p. 304.
[123] Ellis, op. cit., p. 305.
[124] Many West European members of ROCOR belonged to the NTS, a secret anti-communist political party which was infiltrated by both the KGB and the CIA.
[125] Fr. Basil Yakimov, "Re: Fundamental Question", orthodox-synod@yahoo.groups.com, 4 June, 2003.

authorities. The following (Patriarchs) – Alexis and the present Pimen – only go on the road already opened. We have no other hierarchy. The Catacomb Church would be good – but where is it? The True Orthodox Church – these are good people, morally steadfast; but they have almost no priesthood, and you simply can't find them, while there are many who are thirsting. And one has to be ministered to by the hierarchy we do have. Immediately the question arises: are they ministering to us? Basically, they are the puppets of the atheists. And another question: at least, are they believers? Who will answer this question? I fear to answer…"[126]

Such sentiments were close to the truth, and naturally elicited sympathy from members of ROCOR. Less well known – because edited out of his books as published in the West[127] - was Fr. Demetrius' ecumenism. The right attitude to him would have been to applaud his courage and the correct opinions he expressed, while gently seeking to correct his liberalism and ecumenism. In no way was it right to treat him as if he were a true priest in the True Church, and an example to be followed that was no less praiseworthy than those of the true confessors in the catacombs.

But that is precisely what many in ROCOR now began to do. And even the 1974 Council was tempted, declaring: "The boundary between preservation of the Church and seductive self-preservation was drawn by his Holiness Patriarch Tikhon, his lawful locum tenens Metropolitan Peter, Metropolitan Cyril of Kazan, Metropolitan Joseph of Petrograd and the Solovki confessors headed by Archbishop Hilarion (Troitsky). In recent years, this boundary has again been clearly drawn by Archbishop Hermogenes, several priests, among them Nicholas Gainov and Demetrius Dudko, the laypeople of Vyatka led by Boris Talantov, the defenders of the Pochaev Lavra such as Theodosia Kuzminichna Varavva, and many others. This boundary has also been drawn by Solzhenitsyn in his appeal 'Do not live by the lie!' Not to live by the lie and to honour the memory of the holy martyrs and confessors of our Church – this is the boundary separating the true Tikhonites from 'the sergianist leaven of Herod', as wrote Boris Talantov, the rebukers of the present leaders of the patriarchate who died in prison. In our unceasing prayers for each other, in our love for the Lord Jesus, in our faithfulness to the ideal of the past and future Orthodox Russia, the faithful archpastors, pastors, monks and laymen on both sides of the iron curtain are united. Together they constitute the Holy Church of Russia, which is indivisible just as the seamless robe of Christ is indivisible."[128]

This was a serious distortion: to place the confessors of the Catacomb Church on the same level as "dissident" sergianists. A case could be made for considering that Boris Talantov was a true martyr, since he denounced the MP in terms identical to those employed by the Catacomb Church and may well have died out of

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[126] *Posev*, July, 1979 ®; translated in *The Orthodox Word*, September-October, 1979.

[127] Personal communication from Monks of Monastery Press, Montreal, January, 1977.

[128] *Poslanie Tret'ego Vsezarubezhnogo Sobora Russkoj Pravoslavnoj Tserkvi Zagranitsei Pravoslavnomy russkomu narodu na rodine (Epistle of the Third All-Emigration Council of the Russian Orthodox Church Abroad to the Russian People in the Homeland)*, September 8/21, 1974 ®.

communion with the MP. But Dudko and Solzhenitsyn did not share the faith of the True Church, and did not join it even after the fall of communism.[129] Fr. Seraphim Rose also criticized the position of Solzhenitsyn and the pro-MP party.[130]

Voices were heard at the 1974 Council arguing for union not only between ROCOR and the MP dissidents, but also between ROCOR and the schismatic Paris and American Metropolia jurisdictions. Love, they said, should unite us, and we should not emphasize our differences. Metropolitan Philaret, however, pointed out that love which does not wish to disturb our neighbour by pointing out his errors is not love but hatred![131]

The divisions that were beginning to emerge between Metropolitan Philaret and the majority of other hierarchs were expressed by him in a letter to one of his few allies, Protopresbyter George Grabbe, the Secretary of the Synod. Describing a meeting with the hierarchs, he wrote: "I saw how truly alone I am among our hierarchs with my views on matters of principle (although on a personal level I am on good terms with everyone). And I am in earnest when I say that I am considering retiring. Of course, I won't leave all of a sudden, unexpectedly. But at the next Sobor I intend to point out that too many things that are taking place in our church life do not sit well with me. And if the majority of the episcopacy agrees with me than I will

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[129] In fact, before his death in 2004 Dudko became an open advocate of Stalinism and Putin's neo-Stalinism: "I hope so much for Vladimir Putin now. It seems to me that he is like Joseph Stalin. I treat Stalin with respect, and I think that he was a very wise leader. It is Stalin who established such a powerful country. Russia has never been that powerful since, and there was no tsar in Russia who was able to accomplish the things that Stalin did. He managed to overcome and sacrifice so much for the sake of the country's greatness. I hope that Putin will follow in Stalin's path…" (http://english.pravda.ru/politics/2002/11/13/39433; quoted by Nicholas Candela, "[paradosis] the wisdom of an MP priest", orthodox-tradition@yahoo.com, January 22, 2004).

[130] He wrote: "Let us return to the belief of Solzhenitsyn and all the defenders of the Moscow Patriarchate that the betrayal of her hierarchs does not affect the Church's faithful. This view is based on *an entirely false view of the nature of the Church* which artificially separates the hierarchs from the believing people and allows "church life as normal" to go on no matter what happens to the Church leaders. On the contrary, the whole history of the Church of Christ persuades us of the exact opposite. Who else was it but the Bishops of Rome who led the Church of the West into apostasy and schism and heresy? Is it the fault of ordinary believing Roman Catholics that they, the largest group of "Christians" in the world, are today *outside the Church of Christ,* and that in order to return to the true Church they must not only reject the false doctrines of Rome, but also completely reform their religious mentality and unlearn the false piety which has been transmitted to them precisely by their bishops? Today, it is true, the Moscow Patriarchate allows Roman Catholics to receive its Sacraments and implicitly already teaches the ecumenist doctrine that these Catholics too are "part of the Church". But this fact only shows how far the Moscow Patriarchate has departed from the universal Orthodox tradition of the Church into an erroneous ecclesiology, and how correct the True Orthodox Church is in refusing to have communion with an ecclesiastical body which not only allows its policies to be dictated by atheists, but openly preaches the modern heresies of ecumenism and chiliasm." ("The Catacomb Tikhonite Church 1974", *The Orthodox Word*, 1974, pp. 241-242).

[131] See his letter to Fr. Victor Potapov published in *Vertograd-Inform*, № 11 (44), November, 1998, pp. 28-32 ®. He might have quoted St. Maximus the Confessor in this connection: "I want and pray you to be wholly harsh and implacable with the heretics only in regard to cooperating with them or in any way whatever supporting their deranged belief. For I reckon it misanthropy and a departure from Divine love to lend support to error, that those previously seized by it might be even more greatly corrupted." (*P.G.* 91: 465C).

not raise the matter of retiring. But if I see that I am alone or see myself in the minority then I will announce that I am retiring. For I cannot head, nor, therefore bear the responsibility for that with which I am not in agreement in principle. In particular, I do not agree with our practice of halfway relations with the American and Parisian schismatics. The Holy Fathers insistently state that long and obdurately continuing schism is close to being heresy, and that it is necessary to relate to stubborn schismatics as to heretics, not allowing any communion with them whatsoever (how Vladyka Anthony's hair would stand on end at such a pronouncement! But I remain unyielding)…

"There are very many other matters, too, in particular about Solzhenitsyn, concerning whom I continue to remain more than just cautious…"[132]

[132] Metropolitan Philaret to Fr. George Grabbe, July 12/25, 1975, *Vertograd-Inform*, № 11 (68), November, 2000, pp. 52-53 ®.

## *THE FALL OF DISSENT*

In 1976 the ROCOR Synod issued an Epistle to the Russian people which, after declaring unity with the Catacomb Church, went on to say to dissident members of the MP: "We also kiss the cross that you have taken upon yourselves, O pastors who have found in yourselves the courage and strength of spirit to be open reproachers of the weakness of spirit of your hierarchs, who have surrendered before the atheists… We know of your exploit, we pray for you and ask your prayers for our flock that is in the diaspora. Christ is in our midst! He is and shall be!"[133]

"Christ is in our midst! He is and shall be!" are words that Orthodox priests exchange in the altar after the ordination of the Holy Gifts. Their use here implies the recognition of the dissidents as co-celebrants with ROCOR, members of the same Church. Clearly the influence of the dissidents was having a corrosive effect on the ecclesiology of ROCOR.

In February, 1976 the Matthewites broke communion with the Russians, claiming that the Russians had broken their promise to give them a written confession that the new calendarists were graceless[134], and that Archbishop Anthony of Geneva was

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[133] *Pravoslavnaia Rus' (Orthodox Russia)*, 1976, № 20.

[134] The official statements of the ROCOR Synod were indeed weak. Thus on September 12/25, 1974 the Synod declared: "Concerning the question of the presence or absence of grace among the new calendarists the Russian Orthodox Church Abroad does not consider herself or any other Local Church to have the right to make a conclusive decision, since a categorical evaluation in this question can be undertaken only by a properly convened, competent Ecumenical Council, with the obligatory participation of the free Church of Russia." (This was quoted by Metropolitan Philaret in his letter to Archbishop Andreas dated October 5, 1974 (ref. no. 3/50/760)). Again on September 18 / October 1, 1974 the ROCOR Council of Bishops declared: "Manifesting good will [towards the Orthodox Greeks], the Russian Orthodox Church Abroad has called and addressed separate groups of the Church of the Old Calendarists to find the path to make peace and attain fraternal unity. However, the Russian Orthodox Church Abroad has no canonical power over the Church jurisdictions in Greece and therefore cannot interfere in their life with decisions that would be obligatory in questions of their disagreements."

Although ROCOR officially refused to call the new calendarists graceless, there is evidence that Metropolitan Philaret's personal views were stricter and closer to those of the Greeks. Thus on September 20, 1975, he wrote to Metropolitan Epiphanius of Kition, the leader of the Old Calendarist Church of Cyprus, with whom he continued to have friendly relations even after the Matthewite Synod to which Epiphanius belonged had broken communion with ROCOR: "From the beginning our Russian Church has known that the calendar innovation was unacceptable, and has not dared to move this boundary set by patristic tradition, for the Ecclesiastical Calendar is a support of the life of the Church and as such is fortified by decrees of Holy Tradition.

"However, it is obvious to all that the calendar innovation caused a schism in the Greek Church in 1924, and the responsibility for the schism weighs exclusively on the innovators. This is the conclusion that will be reached by anyone studying the Patriarchal Tomoi (as that of 1583) and taking into account the wretched and self-evident fact of the schism and the frightful punishments, persecutions and blasphemies which those who have cleaved to the patristic piety of Holy Tradition have undergone.

"Thinking in this way, our Holy Synod has decreed that we 'flee' concelebrations with the new calendarist modernists. We do not concelebrate with them, nor do we give permission or a blessing to our clergy for such a concelebration. In order to assure you of the truth of what we say, we inform you that whenever a community in the diaspora is received into our Church, they are required to

continuing to have communion with the new calendarists.[135] This was true; and his ecumenist activities continued even after the break with the Matthewite. At Pascha, 1976, he asked permission for pastoral reasons to serve with Russian clerics of the Patriarchate of Constantinople in Europe.[136] In October he again concelebrated with several heretics (a senior MP priest was singing in the choir!) at the funeral of Archbishop Nicodemus of Great Britain. And in May, 1977 he travelled to Birmingham, England to concelebrate with the local Serbs.

Archbishop Anthony's ecumenist actions caused several priests and parishes to leave him for the Matthewites, including those of Fr. Basile Sakkas in Switzerland and of Hieromonk Cassian (Braun) in France, and a parish in England. Metropolitan Philaret expressed disapproval of Archbishop Anthony's canonical transgressions, but he was not in sufficient control of his Synod to obtain his repentance.[137]

In the same critical year of 1976 the well-known Brotherhood of St. Herman of Alaska in Platina, California began to turn away from its previously zealot course to a markedly softer line in relation to the MP and World Orthodoxy.[138] They were influenced in this direction partly by the "dissident fever" that was now raging through most of the Russian part of ROCOR, and partly by the "moderate" ecclesiology of the Greek Old Calendarist Metropolitan Cyprian of Fili. However, a still more important influence may have been a series of controversies – on evolution, on the soul after death, on Blessed Augustine of Hippo – conducted exclusively in the "convert" part of ROCOR between the Platina Brotherhood and the Greek-American monastery in Boston. In all these controversies, in the present writer's opinion, Platina was right as against Boston. But the negative impression that the Platina monks formed of Boston as a result led them to error in the one area of controversy in which the Boston monastery was right – the canonical status of World Orthodoxy and the MP. Arguing that the Boston monastery's "super-

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follow the patristic Calendar of the Orthodox Church…" (from the archives of the True Orthodox Church of Greece)

[135] *Kyrix Gnision Orthodoxon (Herald of the True Orthodox Christians)*, February, 1976, pp. 5-12.

[136] Psarev, op. cit., p. 4.

[137] As he told the present writer in January, 1977, he had a gun at his head. However, he was able to remove Britain, where Archbishop Anthony's ecumenism had elicited protests from the English Orthodox Parish of St. Michael, Guildford, to his own jurisdiction later that year. Unfortunately, the administrator he placed in charge of the British diocese, Archimandrite Alexis (Pobjoy), turned out to be a supporter of Archbishop Anthony…

[138] See especially Fr. Seraphim Rose's article, "The Royal Path" (*The Orthodox Word,* № 70, 1976), in which he wrote: "The Russian Church Outside of Russia has been placed, by God's Providence, in a very favourable position for preserving the 'royal path' amidst the confusion of so much of 20th-century Orthodoxy. Living in exile and poverty in a world that has not understood the suffering of her people, she has focused her attention on preserving unchanged the faith which unites her people, she has focused her attention on preserving unchanged the faith which unites her people, and so quite naturally she finds herself a stranger to the whole ecumenical mentality, which is based on religious indifference and self-satisfaction, material affluence, and soulless internationalism. On the other hand, she has been preserved from falling into extremism on the 'right side' (such as might be a declaration that the Mysteries of the Moscow Patriarchate are without grace)… If there seems to be a 'logical contradiction' here… it is a problem only for rationalists; those who approach church questions with the heart as well as the head have no trouble accepting this position…"

correctness" was leading them to abandon the "Royal Way" as regards the status of the World Orthodox, Platina came out strongly on the side of the liberal wing of ROCOR led by Archbishop Anthony and his idolisation of Fr. Demetrius and the other dissidents.

Another important issue was relations with the Serbian Church. The Serbs, as we have seen, had joined the WCC in 1965, their ecumenism extended to official acceptance of the canonicity of the Anglican Church,[139] and they were as fully under the thumb of the communists as the MP. In spite of this, Archbishop Anthony, continued to serve with the Serbs, citing the pre-war hospitality of the Serbs to ROCOR in his justification. In this connection Metropolitan Philaret wrote to him: "I consider it my duty to point out to you, Vladyka, that your assertion that we must thank the Serbian Church for her treatment of us, I fully accept, but only as regards her past – the glorious past of the Serbian Church. Yes, of course, we must keep the names of their Holinesses Patriarchs Demetrius and Barnabas in grateful memory for their precious support of the Church Abroad at that time when she had no place to lay her head.

"There is no denying that a certain honour is due the Serbian Church for her refusing to condemn our Church Abroad at the parasynagogue in Moscow in 1971, and also on later occasions when Moscow again raised the matter. But then, on the other hand, she did participate in the aforementioned parasynagogue, when it elected Pimen, and the Serbian hierarchs did not protest against this absolutely anti-canonical election, when he who had already been chosen and appointed by the God-hating regime was elected. Our Sobor of 1971 did not, and could not, recognize Pimen, whereas the Serbian Patriarchate recognized and does recognize him, addressing him as Patriarch, and is in full communion with him. And thus she opposes us directly, for we attempt at all times to explain to the "Free World" that the Soviet Patriarchate is not the genuine representative and head of the much-suffering Russian Church. But the Serbian Church recognizes her as such, and by so doing commits a grave sin against the Russian Church and the Russian Orthodox people.

"How can there be any talk here of a special gratitude to her? Oh, if the Serbian Church would, while recognizing our righteousness, likewise directly and openly, boldly recognize the unrighteousness of the Soviets! Well – then there would truly be something for us to thank her for! But now, as it is, while extending one hand to us, she extends her other hand to our opponents and the enemies of God and the Church. If it pleases you, having shut your eyes to this sad reality, to thank the Serbs for such "podvigs" of theirs, then that is your affair, but I am not a participant in this expression of gratitude.

[139] Thus George Deretich writes: "In Waukegan, Illinois (Feb. 7, 1980),… the pro-Belgrade Bishop Firmilian stated openly in court under oath that Episcopalian clergy are canonical priests recognized by his Orthodox Church" *Treacherous Unity*, Acel Officeworks, 1998, p. 68).

"How dangerous are compromises in matters of principle! They render people powerless in defence of the Truth. Why is it that the Serbian Patriarchate cannot resolve to sever communion with the Soviet hierarchy? Because she herself is travelling along the same dark and dangerous path of compromise with the God-hating communists. True, she has not progressed along that path to the extent that the Soviet hierarchy has, and she attempts to preach and defend the faith, but if the shades and nuances here are quite different, yet, in principle, the matter stands on one and the same level".[140]

In 1979, in response to a series of protests by Fr. Demetrius against what he saw as excessive strictness on the part of ROCOR towards the MP, Archbishop Anthony of Geneva, breaking the rule imposed by Metropolitan Anastasy (and reasserted by Metropolitan Philaret) that ROCOR members should have no contact, "even of an everyday nature", wrote to Dudko: "I hasten to console you that the part of the Russian Church which lives in freedom beyond the bounds of the homeland, has never officially considered the Moscow Patriarchate, which is recognised in the USSR, as graceless…. We have never dared to deny the grace-filled nature of the official church, for we believe that the sacraments carried out by her clergy are sacraments. Therefore out bishops received your clergy into the Church Abroad in their existing rank… On the other hand, the representatives of the Catacomb Church in Russia accuse us of not wanting to recognise the Moscow Patriarchate as graceless."[141] However, in 1980, Fr. Demetrius was arrested, which was closely followed by the arrest of his disciples Victor Kapitanchuk and Lev Regelson. Then Dudko issued a recantation on Soviet television in which he confessed that his "so-called struggle with godlessness" was in fact "a struggle with Soviet power". Kapitanchuk and Regelson confessed to having "criminal ties" with foreign correspondents and of mixing religious activity with politics, while Kapitanchuk said that he had "inflicted damage on the Soviet state for which I am very sorry". Both men implicated others in their "crimes".

Metropolitan Philaret had been proved right – although many continued to justify Dudko and denounced those who "judged" him. But it was not a question of "judging", but of the correct discerning of the boundaries of the Church and the correct attitude to those outside it. The metropolitan wrote that the tragedy had overtaken Dudko because his activity had taken place from within the MP – that is, "outside the True Church". And he continued: "What is the 'Soviet church'? Fr. Archimandrite Constantine has said often and insistently that the most terrible thing that the God-fighting authorities have done to Russia is the appearance of the 'Soviet church', which the Bolsheviks offered up to the people as the True Church, having driven the real Orthodox Church into the catacombs or the concentration camps. This false church has been twice anathematised. His Holiness Patriarch Tikhon and the All-Russian Church Council anathematised the communists and all their co-workers. This terrible anathema has not been lifted to this day and preserves its

[140] Letter of Metropolitan Philaret to Archbishop Anthony of Geneva, November 16/29, 1977.
[141] *Vestnik Zapadno-Evropejskoj Eparkhii (Herald of the Western European Diocese)*, 1979, № 14; *Posev (Sowing)*, 1979, № 12 ®.

power, since it can be lifted only by an All-Russian Church Council, as being the canonically higher Church authority. And a terrible thing happened in 1927, when the leader of the Church, Metropolitan Sergius, by his shameful apostate declaration submitted the Russian Church to the Bolsheviks and declared that he was cooperating with them. In the most exact sense the expression of the prayer before confession was fulfilled: 'fallen under his own anathema'! For in 1918 the Church anathematised all the co-workers of communism, and in 1927 she herself entered into the company of these co-workers and began to praise the red God-fighting authorities – to praise the red beast of which the Apocalypse speaks. And this is not all. When Metropolitan Sergius published his criminal declaration, the faithful children of the Church immediately separated from the Soviet church, and the Catacomb Church was created. And she in her turn anathematised the official church for her betrayal of Christ… We receive clergymen from Moscow not as ones possessing grace, but as ones receiving it by the very act of union. But to recognize the church of the evil-doers as the bearer and repository of grace – that we, of course, cannot do. For outside of Orthodoxy there is *no* grace; and the Soviet church has deprived itself of grace."[142]

Looking at this tragedy from a psychological point of view, we can see that Dudko's vulnerability consisted, not so much in the fear of physical torture, as in the KGB's ability to induce in him a feeling of false guilt, guilt that he had objectively harmed the Soviet State. This tragedy exposed an inescapable dilemma facing all the dissidents: that action aimed to restore the freedom of the Church was necessarily anti-soviet, insofar as the Soviet State and the Orthodox Church represented incompatible aims and ideologies. Therefore every committed campaigner for Church freedom sooner or later had to admit that he was working against Soviet power – if not by physical, at any rate by spiritual, means, and that he had to work outside the political and ecclesiastical institutions of Soviet power. So the failure of the dissidents was the natural consequence of the refusal to obey the Apostle's command: "Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers" (II Corinthians 6.14). They refused to obey Patriarch Tikhon's adjuration to the faithful to have no communion at all with the communists, "the outcasts of humanity". They tried to do good from within an accursed evil - the pact between Metropolitan Sergius and the

[142] "A Letter from Metropolitan Philaret (Voznesensky) to a Priest of the Church Abroad concerning Father Dimitry Dudko and the Moscow Patriarchate", *Vertograd-Inform*, № 4, February, 1999, pp. 16-20. A few years earlier, on August 14/27, 1977, Metropolitan Philaret told the present writer: "I advise you always to remain faithful to the anathema of the Catacomb Church against the Moscow Patriarchate." And the following is an extract from Protocol № 3 of the ROCOR Sobor, dated October 8/21, 1974: "Bishop Gregory says that to the question of the existence (of grace) it is not always possible to give a final reply immediately. The loss of grace is the consequence of spiritual death, which sometimes does not come immediately. Thus plants sometimes die gradually. In relation to the loss of grace in the Moscow Patriarchate, it would be interesting to make the comparison with the position of the iconoclasts, although the sin of the Patriarchate is deeper. The President [Metropolitan Philaret] says that we cannot now issue a resolution on grace in the Moscow Patriarchate, but we can be certain that grace lives only in the true Church, but the Moscow hierarchs have gone directly against Christ and His work. How can there be grace among them? The metropolitan personally considers that the Moscow Patriarchate is graceless." (*Tserkovnie Novosti (Church News)*, № 4 (95), June-July, 2001, p. 9).

Communists which, in the words of a samizdat document dating from the early 1970s, "tied the Church hand and foot by imposing on her a loyalty not only to the State, *but mainly to the communist ideology*."[143]

[143] *Archives* 12/92, № 892б March 29, 1972, in *Orthodox Life*, September-October, 1974.

## *THE GEORGIAN CHURCH*

The Georgian Church, though technically autocephalous, was no less completely under the control of the KGB than the MP.[144] It, too, suffered from the anti-religious policies of Khrushchev in 1959-64. Patriarch Ephraim II may have been nominated by the KGB in 1960, and bowed to their pressure. As Zviad Gamsakhurdia, the future president of independent Georgia, wrote: "From 1965 I became much more active in church affairs… Between 1965 and 1969 I and my friends drew many young people towards an interest in religion. We gave them spiritual literature, explained the basic doctrines of religion, argued with atheists until gradually we attracted a significant number of Georgian young people to the Church. This was especially noticeable at Eastertide when all the churches overflowed. The income of the Church greatly increased, its bank balance grew, and so did the number of those applying to enter the seminary.

"All this aroused a great deal of concern in government circles. As is well known, the Soviet government tries by all means to deflect young people from religion. This happened in Georgia too.

"The authorities began by blackmailing and pressurizing Ephraim II. Georgia was filled with damaging rumours about him. I shall not repeat any of them, but will only report what I know definitely and what I am personally convinced is the truth.

"The pressure from the authorities alarmed Ephraim II. He was not like those strong and high principled Patriarchs, Ambrosy Kalaya or Kalistrat Lintsadze. All this slowly affected the style and content of his preaching and his relationship with us, the young flock of the Georgian Church. If before Ephraim had spoken boldly, expressing covert opposition to the Soviet regime (the newspapers even used to criticize his sermons), in his later years his preaching became empty, his appeals merely patriotic, so that it was hard to believe that it was a Christian pastor who spoke. The only bold appeal he made was to believing women to have large families. 'Be fruitful and multiply!' was the chief theme of his preaching at that time. Naturally all this had a bad effect on the young laity, who expected much from a Patriarch. (In addition, a number of priests unworthy of the name caused abuses in the Church which repelled and disillusioned young people …)

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[144] The following account relies heavily on Steven Jones' article, "Soviet Religious Policy and the Georgian Orthodox Apostolic Church: from Khrushchev to Gorbachev", *Religion in Communist Lands*, vol. 17, № 4, Winter, 1989, pp. 292-312. Declassified documents from the KGB archives contain the following assessment for 1982: "Through the work of our agents the Russian Orthodox, Georgian and Armenian churches maintain staunchly loyal positions" (*Vestnik Germanskoj Eparkhii Russkoj Pravoslavnoj Tserkvi za Granitsei (Herald of the German Diocese of the Russian Church Abroad)*, № 1, 1992, p. 20 ®).

"Ephraim made no secret of the fact that it was the KGB who forbade him to lend books to the young believers. Once he even joked about it: 'You know that when Moscow calls the tune, we must dance to it, or it will go ill with us.'"[145]

One of the senior bishops in the Georgian Church at this time was Metropolitan Ilia (Shiolashvili) of Sukhumi, who from 1963 to 1972 was Rector of the Georgian Orthodox Theological Seminary. In 1962 he had been recruited by the Georgian KGB Unit V with the codename "Iverieli".[146] And when the future Georgian president Edward Shevardnadze became Georgian party First Secretary in 1972, there began a long, "symphonic" relationship between the two men which lasted until Shevardnadze's fall from power in 2003. Ilia proved his worth to his employers when, as Metropolitan of Sukhumi in the 1970s, he betrayed the Catacomb Bishop Gennadius (Sekach) to the authorities.[147] And he was an ardent ecumenist, travelling to many ecumenist forums in many countries as the representative of the patriarchate of Georgia. Ilia set his face firmly against the dissident movement among Georgian Orthodox Christians, which combined concern for human rights with a campaign against Church servility and corruption with a strong emphasis on Georgian nationalism. In 1975-77, the leaders of this movement – Zviad Gamsakhurdia, Valentina Pailodze and Merab Kostava – were all arrested and given sentences in the camps. Gamsakhurdia, however, recanted on Soviet central television; and the reduction in his sentence to two years' exile suggested that he had made a "deal" with the authorities.

On November 9, 1979, "Catholicos-Patriarch David V of Georgia died. *Religion in Communist Lands* reports that, upon the death of Patriarch David V, Metropolitan Ilia was *appointed* Patriarchal locum tenens of the Georgian Orthodox Church by the Holy Synod. Leading the delegation dispatched by Patriarch Pimen of Moscow to the funeral of Patriarch David was Metropolitan Alexis (Ridiger) of Tallinn and Estonia, the present Patriarch of Russia, and Pimen's direct successor. The *Journal of the Moscow Patriarchate* notes that 'during his stay in Tbilisi, the head of the delegation from the Russian Orthodox Church, Metropolitan Alexis, paid a visit to T. D. Onoprishvili, representative of the Council for Religious Affairs of the USSR Council of Ministers in the Georgian SSR' (*JMP,* No. 3, 1978, p. 43)…

"…the most likely candidate for the patriarchal throne seemed to be Metropolitan Gaioz (Kepatishvili) of Tsilkani, on whose side were the majority of the bishops and clergy. Another contender was Metropolitan Ilia of Sukhumi and Abkhazia, who also had a sizable following. Metropolitan Gaioz and his supporters forcibly occupied the Patriarchal headquarters, having ejected the watchman and lone nun, supporters of Ilia, who had been guarding it. Thereupon telegrams were sent to all the heads of the Local Orthodox Churches, announcing that Metropolitan Gaioz had

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[145] "Dr. Gamsakhurdia writes to RCL", *Religion in Communist Lands,* vol. 4, № 4, Winter, 1976, pp. 48, 49.

[146] *Orthodox Tradition*, vol. XV, № 1, p. 34. According to Alexander Soldatov ("Cherez revoliutsii – k tsarstvu", *Ogonek*, http://www.ogoniok.com/5023/16/, p. 2), his recruitment took place in 1968.

[147] Nun E., a disciple of Gennadius, personal communication, 1990.

been 'elected' *Locum Tenens* of the Patriarchal throne. Oddly enough, these telegrams got no further than the local post office. It seems that the appropriate 'competent organs' of state had by this time already reached a decision. (More on this below.) Then the militia burst into the headquarters of the Patriarchate, in turn forcibly expelled the followers of Metropolitan Gaioz, and ushered in those of Metropolitan Ilia, who was then declared locum tenens. And, of course, this time his telegrams reached their destination. The new locum tenens hastily ordained several bishops from among his supporters in the clergy, thus 'packing the court'.

"Metropolitan Gaioz was forced, for appearance sake, to participate in the election and enthronement of Catholicos-Patriarch Ilia II. He was made to place the Patriarchal panagias and cross around the neck of the new Primate -- a bitter pill to swallow indeed! Soon thereafter Metropolitan Gaioz was arrested and charged with various crimes, including theft of church property, speculation in foreign currency, and moral depravity. The public prosecutor asked for the maximum sentence permitted by the law code then in force, which was fifteen years imprisonment. However, the plaintiff on behalf of the Church, Archimandrite Nicholas Makharadze, demanded the death penalty! Metropolitan Gaioz was eventually sentenced to fifteen years in prison…

"… In 1979 Patriarch Ilia II was… elected one of the six presidents of the World Council of Churches… He then inserted the new title into the text of his official commemoration during the church services: 'For our Great Lord and Father, Catholicos-Patriarch of All Georgia, Archbishop of Mtskheta and Tbilisi, *President of the World Council of Churches,* Ilia II'! He likewise used the title when issuing his annual Paschal and Christmas encyclicals, and in all published accounts of his ecumenical activities abroad (e.g.: *Grapevine Cross,* No. 2, 1981, p. 3)…"[148]

[148] "Out of thine own mouth will I judge thee", *Orthodox Christian Witness,* August 3/16, 1998 and August 17/30, 1998; http://www.geocities.com/Athens/Thebes/1865/ili.htm?200522.

## *"NIKODIMOVSCHINA"*

From the 1970s we see the ascendancy in the MP of a school of thought devoted both to the interests of the Soviet State and of the ecumenical movement which has been called "Nikodimovschina" from its first leader and originator, Metropolitan Nicodemus, KGB Agent "Sviatoslav". Nicodemus' activity was soon bearing fruit. "The *Great Soviet Encyclopaedia* recorded that by 1972 the WCC had been converted from a 'pro-Western' to a 'progressive' orientation in its policies on peace, disarmament and related matters. Assiduous advocacy by the Christian Peace Conference and others of the view that Christianity and communism were natural allies in support of the national liberation movement induced the WCC to provide funds for African guerilla movements, including the Rhodesian Patriotic Front, believed to be responsible for a massacre of British missionaries in 1978."[149]

Ever since writing his master's thesis on Pope John XXIII, the man who led the Catholic Church onto the ecumenical scene, Metropolitan Nicodemus had been trying to do the same for the MP. Hierodeacon (now Igumen) Theophanes (Areskin) writes: "Metropolitan Nicodemus begins his exposition of his ecumenist faith with an Orthodox thesis on the unity of the whole human race in Adam: 'Mankind, the whole Adam (in the expression of St. Macarius the Great) is united by means of the Incarnation, Cross and Resurrection of the last Adam (I Corinthians 14.45), the second Man, the Lord Who "for us men" came down from the heavens (I Corinthians 15.47), and, having tasted "death for us all by the grace of God" (Hebrews 2.9), "is the Saviour of all men" (I Timothy 4.10)… We all, in accordance with the ineffable wisdom of God, have been bound from the beginning with the bonds of unity and brotherhood'. But further on Metropolitan Nicodemus reveals his understanding of this unity: 'Christ died for all men, and, as the new Adam, he laid the beginning for a new humanity… The fullness of the grace-filled gifts is communicated to people by the Holy Spirit in the Church of Christ. However, it would be a dangerous error to consider that Christ, the Redeemer of the whole world, does not extend His saving influence on the whole of humanity.' This saving influence consists, according to Metropolitan Nicodemus, 'in faith in Christ Jesus, acting through love in each separate person, as in the whole of humanity, with which we are united by our common human nature. God redeemed us into an undivided, indivisible, unchanging and unconfused union with this nature through the incarnation of the Only-Begotten Son.' 'By taking on and deifying our nature in the Divine Incarnation the Chief and Accomplisher of our faith (Hebrews 12.2) and of eternal salvation (Hebrews 5.9), our Lord Jesus Christ reconciled, united and related *the whole of humanity with God, and all people with each other*'. 'The Church as the Kingdom of God is likened to leaven which penetrates into all the parts of the whole that is humanity, into the whole world, and acts with that measure of power which corresponds to the moral level of the bearers of Christ's truth. And although far from all people actively and consciously abide in the Church, *the Church abides in all through the love of Christ*, for this love is not limited by any part of humanity, but is

[149] Dr. Olga Ackerly, "High Treason in ROCOR: The Rapprochement with Moscow", http://stnicholascandles.com/High_Treason.htm, p. 32.

distributed to all people.' Hence 'the activity of the Spirit of God is not limited by confessional limits. His manifestation is completely and, above all, unconditionally revealed in the Church, but the traces of His presence are evident everywhere where there are the fruits of spiritual life: love, joy, peace, long-suffering, kindness…' Therefore all people, the whole Body of humanity (Adam), are invisibly united with God and is a certain 'invisible Church'. The organization of the Church is understood by Nicodemus as 'the visible Church', in which 'baptism defines the *visible* belonging to Christ'. Metropolitan Nicodemus consciously confesses the 'baptism' of Protestants to be true, turning to his 'brothers in Christ', the Protestants, the members of the WCC: 'Through the mystery of holy Baptism we are engrafted onto the saving Divine Vine…' But the visible Church 'is called to realize the fruits of the Incarnation and Redemption in the life of her *immediate* members.'

"And so, according to Metropolitan Nicodemus, all people are 'Christians', it is true that the Church of Christ, the Body of Christ, the New Adam, is one, but it is not yet united into one ecclesiastical organization under one leader. The aim of the ecumenists is to create this *mediation*, that is, one single visible ecclesiastical organization for all. In this way the ecumenical Church and the world become indistinguishable from each other. It is not difficult to find the primary source of this faith. It is sergianism – a heretical teaching that the Church, the Body of Christ, is a simple ecclesiastical organization, just like ordinary secular organizations, political parties, communities, commercial structures, etc."[150]

The death of Nicodemus in 1978 in Rome at the feet of Pope John-Paul I, who read the prayers for the departing of the soul over him[151], was a graphic symbol of the true direction of inter-Christian ecumenism – aided and abetted by the KGB. His place both as chief ideologist of the MP, Metropolitan of Leningrad and leader of the "Nikodimovshina" school of theology, was taken by his pupil, the future "Patriarch" Alexis II (Ridiger). And when Pope John-Paul died a few days after Nicodemus, Alexis celebrated a festive service for the repose of his soul in the Moscow Cathedral of the Epiphany, while another of Nicodemus' disciples, the present Metropolitan Cyril (Gundyaev), celebrated a similar service in the Alexander Nevsky Lavra in Leningrad.[152]

Alexis, an Estonian by birth (he was bishop in Tallin before his transfer to Leningrad), had been a KGB agent with codename "Drozdov" since 1958 and an active ecumenist for almost as long as his mentor. He was a delegate to the Third General Assembly of the WCC in New Delhi in 1961, (with Metropolitans Nicodemus and Anthony (Bloom)), a member of the Central Committee of the WCC from 1961 to 1968, president of the World Conference, "The Church and Society" in

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[150] Hierodeacon Theophan, "The Head of the Moscow Patriarchate", *Vertograd-Inform*, № 20, October, 2000, pp. 18-19.

[151] *Zhurnal Moskovskoj Patriarkhii* (Journal of the Moscow Patriarchate), 1978, № 11; *The Boston Globe*, September 6, 1978, p. 65; "On the Death of a Soviet Bishop", *Orthodox Christian Witness*, October 23 / November 5, 1978; Piers Compton, *The Broken Cross: The Hidden Hand in the Vatican*, Sudbury: Neville Spearman, 1983, pp. 158-159.

[152] L. Perepiolkina, *Ecumenism – A Path to Perdition,* St. Petersburg, 1999, p. 129.

Geneva in 1966, and a member of the Commission "Faith and Order" of the WCC from 1961 to 1968.

In the 1974 Furov report to the Central Committee of the USSR Alexis (together with his predecessor Patriarch Pimen) was placed in the category of those bishops who "affirm both in words and deeds not only loyalty but also patriotism towards the socialist society; strictly observe the laws on cults, and educate the parish clergy and believers in the same spirit; realistically understand that our state is not interested in proclaiming the role of religion and the church in society; and, realizing this, do not display any particular activeness in extending the influence of Orthodoxy among the population."[153]

According to a KGB document of 1988, "An order was drafted by the USSR KGB chairman to award an honorary citation to agent DROZDOV" [i.e. Alexis] for unspecified services to state security.[154]

"Already in 1966," writes Hierodeacon (now Igumen) Theophan, "in his speech before the delegation of the German Evangelical church at a conference in Moscow, the future head of the MP in the name of Christ Himself declared that 'Jesus Christ considers His own, that is, as Christians, all those who believe in Him and obey Him, and this is more than the Orthodox Church.' If we remember that, according to Orthodox teaching, Christ adopted people to Himself only in His Hypostasis, that is, in His Body which is the Orthodox Church, then it is obvious that the metropolitan is here confessing a christological heresy, considering as Christians those who are outside the Church – calling them 'God's', that is, the Church's.

"Alexis still more clearly confesses that all the non-Orthodox Christians are the Church of Christ in his report to the 8th General Assembly of the World Council of Churches, published in the *Journal of the Moscow Patriarchate* in 1980 (№№ 1-3). Here, blasphemously mixing up and identifying the concepts of the presence of God in the world and His energies and presence in the Church, the metropolitan very distinctly reveals his heretical teaching on the "all-embracing and unconditional" Incarnation of Christ, which automatically turns the whole of humanity, all Christians, Muslims, pagans, and in general all 'men of good will' into members of the Body of Christ, that is, the Church! Metropolitan Alexis openly teaches that the same grace of the Holy Spirit acts in the non-Orthodox churches – the participants in the WCC – as in the Orthodox Church: 'We (the CEC) have learned to pray together, to understand the spirit and depth of prayer for each other, to feel the breath of the grace of the Holy Spirit in joint prayer to the Lord … we must thank God for the joy of our communion in Christ, for the joy of the ever-increasing experience of brotherhood and sisterhood in Christ in our work.' Thus it was precisely in joint prayers with heretics that the archpastor felt the breath of 'the grace of the Holy Spirit'! We should note that 'ecumenical prayer' is a very important moment in the ecumenical

[153] Christopher Andrew and Vasily Mitrokhin, *The Mitrokhin File,* London: Allen Lane the Penguin Press, 1999, pp. 639-640.
[154] Andrew and Mitrokhin, op. cit., p. 650.

dialogue, it not only witnesses to the presence among the ecumenists of some common 'god' to whom this prayer is raised, but it is also a practical recognition of the action of the Holy Spirit in heterodoxy, thereby aiding the aggiornamento of the churches. This is what the future head of the MP says on this subject: 'The aggiornamento of the churches is attained in the first place by prayer and brotherly love; joint prayers create a special atmosphere, a spiritual mood; (he goes on to cite A.S. Khomiakov) prayer is the life of the Church and the voice of her love, the eternal breathing of the Spirit of God. We believe that through joint prayers the breathing of the Spirit of God jointly enriches us all.'

"According to Orthodox teaching, it is precisely the Holy Spirit that makes a man a member of the Church of Christ, a Christian. But Metropolitan Alexis recognises that the Holy Spirit works in heretics just as in the Orthodox Church, and therefore heretics, like Orthodox Christians, are the Church of Christ: 'We believe that the Holy Spirit – visibly or invisibly – continues until now His saving activity in the world. You and I, dear brothers and sisters, representing various Churches and the human race, live *by the same real and grace-filled power* of Pentecost'. From this there follows an open admittance on the part of the metropolitan that the heretical communities are the Church and the Body of Christ: 'We, the Orthodox, are lovingly disposed to our non-Orthodox brothers, for we have all *been baptized in one Spirit*, and we have all *been made to drink into one Spirit* (I Corinthians12.13).' Here the Apostle Paul's eucharistic (even liturgical) terminology has not been used in vain, so as once more to emphasise: Orthodox and heretics are not simply a divided Church, but the Body of Christ, organically one in the Holy Spirit.

"The source of this teaching of Metropolitan Alexis on the Holy Spirit is a heretical Christology, whose essence consists in the assertion that 'we all have been received into the nature of Jesus Christ the God-man as an integral nature. And this truth forces us to believe that every person striving towards goodness and righteousness does the work of Christ on earth, even if he intellectually has not known Christ or has even rejected Him. From the Godmanhood of Christ it follows that the path into the Kingdom of God has been opened to all men. Consequently, with the Incarnation of the Son of God the whole of humanity becomes His potential Church, and in this sense the boundaries of the Christian Ecumene (or the pan-human family) are far wider than the boundaries of the Christian world.' Hence Metropolitan Alexis' teaching becomes understandable: insofar as Christ has received into His Hypostasis the *common* nature of man, all people, that is, all human hypostases of all generations are saved and remain in Christ, that is, in the Church. In other words, Christ has saved the whole nature of man, and consequently, according to the thought of Metropolitan Alexis, all people.

"However, according to the Orthodox teaching, 'God the Word, on becoming incarnate, did not take on the nature viewed as an abstraction in pure thought,… nor the nature contemplated in species (that is, viewed in all the hypostases of the human race – H. Th.), for He did not take on all the hypostases, but He took on that which received its existence in His Hypostasis'. That is, it is impossible to say that

since God the Word became Man, all people are saved by virtue of being men. But Metropolitan Alexis affirms that in the humanity of Christ is contained all men's hypostases. Such a teaching was confessed in the 11th century by the Monk Nilus of Calabria, who taught that all human hypostases are present or are contained in the humanity taken on by the Lord and are 'co-deified' together with Him. The Orthodox Church anathematized Nilus and his heresy: 'If anyone dogmatises that all human hypostases are in the flesh taken on by the Lord and are co-deified with it, let him be anathema, for this is empty chatter, or, rather, manifest impiety.' And although the metropolitan makes the qualification that humanity for him is only 'the potential church', nevertheless he later on unambiguously speaks of the whole of humanity as of the Church – the Body of Christ, the Temple of the Holy Spirit: 'Christ redeemed, cleansed and recreated a common human nature for all, while the Holy Spirit morally transfigures each human personality, gives the Christian the fullness of grace, makes him a temple of God and dwells in him, raises the growth of spirituality in the mind and the heart, leads him to every truth and gives him spiritual gifts to his benefit: to one – the word of wisdom, to another – the word of knowledge, by the same Spirit… and other gifts (I Corinthians 12.7-11), so that human talents should be revealed more fully.' In this way, insofar as God the Word has been incarnate in a common human nature, His Body is the divided Christian Church in the combination of all its separate parts. However, the saving action of the Holy Spirit is poured out even beyond the bounds of the Body of Christ, penetrating into and deifying the body of the whole of humanity: 'The all-embracing and most powerful force of the Holy Spirit is spread out onto the whole life of our world, transforming it in the course of the historical process of the struggle between good and evil.'

"And so, thanks to a clever substitution of concepts, the real difference between the grace of the Holy Spirit, by which God providentially preserves the world in existence and leads people to the Church, and the deifying mystical presence of the Holy Spirit in the Body of Christ, the Church, is destroyed, which completely abolishes the difference between the Church and the world: now 'the cultural efflorescence of European and world Christianity' is declared to be an action of the Holy Spirit, and even the Salt-2 treaty between Brezhnev and Carter concerning the limiting of strategic offensive weapons is also 'a manifestation of the invisible power of the Holy Spirit acting in the world for the good of the whole of humanity.'

"The consequences of this 'pan-human Pentecost' are expressed by the metropolitan mainly in the terms of humanism and peace-making: 'Christian concern for questions of social justice', 'the elements of the movement for peace', Christians' service to people and their 'involvement in all the complexity of the real life of the world'. In this way the life of grace in the Body of Christ is substituted by a humanistic 'serving the affairs of the world'.

"It is understandable that this 'theology of peace' should be very convenient for the dialogue not only with any heretical Christian communities, but also with any religions, even with utopian teachings like communism.

"But how is such a faith compatible with the Orthodox teaching on the uniqueness and singleness of the One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church? Yes, admits Metropolitan Alexis, 'the oneness and unity of the Church is an ecclesiological axiom', but in actual fact 'an invisible unity as the unity of Christ and the Holy Spirit lives in the visible multitude of Churches, each of which has its particular face', affirms the metropolitan, citing his brother in ecumenism, Professor Archbishop Vladimir (Sabodan). Before us here is the classical ecumenist ecclesiology – 'the branch theory', which was invented by Archbishop Stylianos of Australia (Constantinopolitan patriarchate), or, using the language of Soviet theological thought, the ecclesiology of 'the traumatized Body of Christ', a fruit of the refined minds of the 'ecumenist theologians' of the MP – the main teacher and implanter of the ecumenist heresy in the MP was Metropolitan Nicodemus (Rotov)."[155]

[155] Hierodeacon Theophan, op. cit., pp. 15-18.

## ***ARCHBISHOP MARK OF BERLIN***

The influence of the KGB on Church life extended well beyond the borders of the Soviet Union and beyond the ranks of the East European Churches. In 1979 a layman of ROCOR, Mark Arndt, was arrested at Leningrad airport for importing anti-Soviet material and then released. In view of the later importance of Mark as ROCOR's Archbishop of Berlin, the following words written about him in 2004 by a former KGB operative, Constantine Preobrazhensky, acquire considerable importance:-

"In 1979 the future Archbishop Mark [of Berlin] was arrested at the Soviet border for importing anti-Soviet literature. Nobody knows on what date. Nor does anybody know how long Mark was detained by the KGB, whether for one day or several…

"At that time Mark Arndt was an activist of NTS, the People's Labour Union, which had once been a warlike anti-Soviet organisation but was then properly crammed with KGB agents.

"Some Russian émigrés today say: 'What if the KGB simply frightened Mark and then let him go with God's blessing?'

"I assure you as a retired lieutenant-colonel of the KGB: this could not have happened. Because the import of anti-Soviet literature came under article 70 of the Criminal Code of the RSFSR, "Anti-Soviet agitation and propaganda". It was considered an especially dangerous state crime and promised a considerable jail sentence.

"And how then, after arresting Mark, would the chekists have given an account of their work? Explained that they had let him go? And where would the concrete result so valued by the KGB be? Or, as they say there, 'the dry remains'?

"But nobody would have allowed him to be released!

"After all, every foreigner who fell for righteousness' or unrighteousness' sake into the hands of the KGB was considered to be a fat, tasty chicken. He could have been exchanged for a Soviet spy who had fallen into captivity, or used for communist propaganda.

"All this would have been considered to be a great success and promised rewards for the chekists. But if they released him, there would have been no bonus. After all, the KGB is a military system. Every step there has to be agreed with tens of bosses.

"The chekists could have released him only in exchange for a still greater bonus. And they give that for the recruitment of a foreigner. It is considered the greatest achievement in the work of a chekist. His career would have been on the up.

"They teach how to recruit foreigners who are arrested by them in the Minsk KGB school…

"They worked on Mark. He would even have had to spend the night in the KGB…

"Sergius Grigoryants [the founder of *Glasnost*] told me the following: '… The fact that the KGB let Mark go in such a "humane" fashion shows that a love match may have been set up between them.'…

"There are *agents of influence*, who act on the politics of their country in a spirit that is useful for Russia. But as a rule they do not break its laws.

"If Archbishop Mark is truly an agent of the KGB, then he belongs to this category. Does his activity correspond to the external political aims of the Putin administration? Undoubtedly yes. It helps submit the Church Abroad to Moscow, so as to take the Russian emigration under the control of the FSB [the new name for the KGB]…"[156]

Archbishop Mark immediately and sharply responded to Preobrazhensky's accusations: "I have never and nowhere been arrested, and I will not comment on every absurdity".

More recently, Preobrazhensky has returned to the attack on Archbishop Mark, citing the witness of Bishop Irenaeus of Verney and Semirechiye of the Russian True Orthodox Church, who in 1990, as Protopriest Vladimir Klipenshtein, was appointed rector of the church of St. Symeon of the Wonderful Mountain in Dresden by Archbishop Mark. To his surprise he discovered that this church had formerly been in the MP, but that in that year the government of United Germany had decided to return all the Russian churches to ROCOR – and were prepared to enforce that decision by force if necessary. Fr. Vladimir joyfully phoned Archbishop Mark to tell him about this, but received the unexpected reply:

"I'm ready hang myself because of your actions!"

"But where then am I to serve?" said Fr. Vladimir in amazement.

"Rent a flat and serve at home!" shouted Archbishop Mark.

"It was strange: it was he who had appointed Fr. Vladimir as rector of the church, but now he was not allowing him to serve in it! Where was the logic in that?"

Fr. Vladimir later learned that, over ten years before a part of ROCOR was engulfed by the MP, Archbishop Mark served with his patriarchal "double",

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[156] Preobrazhensky, "Dve Tajny Arkhiepiskopa Marka" (Two Mysteries of Archbishop Mark), *Portal-credo*, 12 May, 2004, http://cherksoft.narod.ru/mut59.htm.

Archbishop Theophan of Berlin and Germany. Moreover, although he visited the Dresden parish and served with its patriarchal rector, Fr. George Davidov, he never took the church from him. Then Fr. Vladimir found out from the German counter-espionage service that all the patriarchal priests in Germany were KGB agents!

Fr. Vladimir's inquiries were extremely displeasing to Archbishop Mark, who recalled him to his monastery of St. Job in Munich, and then told him that he would not be serving in Germany, whereupon he returned to his homeland.

"Bishop Irenaeus noted in a conversation with me that if at that time, in 1999, Mark's work on the cadres in favour of Moscow had become widely known, this would have elicited such a scandal that last year's 'union of the Churches' could not have taken place. The more so in that at that time the leader of the Church Abroad was Metropolitan Vitaly, who was known for his categorical rejection of the Bolsheviks, the chekists and 'the Soviet patriarchate'.

"'I am convinced that it was precisely Mark who led the conspiracy to remove Metropolitan Vitaly in 2000,' noted Bishop Irenaeus."[157]

[157] Preobrazhensky, "Sviaschenniki i Razvedchiki", http:/elmager.livejournal.com/222404.html?=reply.

# ***PENTECOSTALISM AND ORTHODOXY***

Pentecostalism may be said to date back precisely to New Year's Eve, 1900, when "the age of the Spirit" and "the new Pentecost" is supposed to have dawned. "For some time before that moment," wrote Hieromonk Seraphim Rose, "a Methodist minister in Topeka, Kansas, Charles Parham, as an answer to the confessed feebleness of his Christian ministry, had been concentratedly studying the New Testament with a group of his students with the aim of discovering the secret of the *power* of Apostolic Christianity. The students finally deduced that this secret lay in the 'speaking in tongues' which, they thought, always accompanied the reception of the Holy Spirit in the Acts of the Apostles. With increasing excitement and tension, Parham and his students resolved to pray until they themselves receive the 'Baptism of the Holy Spirit' together with speaking in tongues. On December 31, 1900, they prayed from morning to night with no success, until one young girl suggested that one ingredient was missing in this experiment: 'laying on of hands'. Parham put his hands on the girl's head, and immediately she began to speak in an 'unknown tongue'. Within three days there were many such 'Baptisms', including that of Parham himself and twelve other ministers of various denominations, and all of them were accompanied by speaking in tongues. Soon the revival spread to Texas, and then it had spectacular success at a small Negro church in Los Angeles.[158] Since then it has spread throughout the world and claims ten million members [in 1983].

"For half a century the Pentecostal Movement remained sectarian and everywhere it was received with hostility by the established denominations. Then, however, speaking in tongues began gradually to appear in the denominations themselves, although at first it was kept rather quiet, until in 1960 an Episcopalian priest near Los Angeles gave wide publicity to this fact by publicly declaring that he had received the 'Baptism of the Holy Spirit' and spoke in tongues. After some initial hostility, the 'charismatic renewal' gained the official or unofficial approval of all the major denominations and has spread rapidly both in America and abroad. Even the once rigid and exclusivist Roman Catholic Church, once it took up the 'charismatic renewal' in earnest in the later 1960s, has been enthusiastically swept up in this movement. In America, the Roman Catholic bishops gave their approval to the movement in 1969, and the few thousand Catholics involved in it then have since increased to untold hundreds of thousands, who gather periodically in local and nationwide 'charismatic' conferences whose participants are sometimes numbered in the tens of thousands. The Roman Catholic countries of Europe have also become

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[158] This was on April 9, 1906. "The leader of the group," writes Karen Armstrong, "was William Joseph Seymour (1870-1915), the son of slaves who had been freed after the Civil War, who had long been searching for a more immediate and uninhibited type of religion than was possible in the more formal white Protestant denominations. By 1900, he had been converted to Holiness spirituality, which believed that, as the prophet Joel had foretold, the gifts of healing, ecstasy, tongue, and prophecy enjoyed by the Primitive Church would be restored to the people of God immediately before the Last Days. When Seymour and his friends experienced the Spirit, the news spread like wildfire. Crowds of African Americans and disadvantaged whites poured into his next service in such huge numbers that they had to move to an old warehouse in Azusa street" (*The Battle for God,* New York: Ballantine, 1001, p. 179).

enthusiastically 'charismatic', as witnessed by the 'charismatic' conference in Summer, 1978, in Ireland, attended by thousands of Irish priests. Not long before his death Pope Paul VI met with a delegation of 'charismatics' and proclaimed that he too is a Pentecostal."[159]

Although Pentecostalism was slower than Ecumenism to penetrate Orthodoxy, we have already seen its influence in the words of Metropolitan Alexis (Ridiger), when speaking about a "pan-human Pentecost". It gave a tremendous boost to Ecumenism, becoming the "heart", as Ecumenism was the "mind" of the new religion of the future. No attention was paid to the question whether the spirit behind the tongues was the Holy Spirit or not. To those who endeavoured to obey the command: "Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God" (I John 4.1), it seemed clear that it was not, and that the Apostles' words to the Corinthians applied also to the Pentecostalists: "If ye receive another spirit, which ye have not received [i.e. a different spirit from the Holy Spirit],… ye might well bear with him" (II Corinthians 11.4).

Although Pentecostalists assert that their gift of tongues is the same as that which was given to the early Church, they forget that even in the early Church this gift had its counterfeits. Thus Archbishop Averky of Syracuse, commenting on the twelfth chapter of St. Paul's First Epistle to the Corinthians, writes: "among the Corinthians many began to look on these grace-filled manifestations of the Holy Spirit as a reason for vainglory and arrogance. While striving to acquire one of the more striking gifts, they even fell into self-deception, and without acquiring any gift at all, they were in a frenzy, pronouncing disjointed and incomprehensible words, and sometimes, in the darkness of their minds and hearts, they shouted out blasphemous thoughts, pronouncing, for example, anathema on Jesus. Here was evident the influence of pagan prophetesses like Pytheas or the Sibyl. In an artificially induced false inspiration, foaming at the mouth and with loosened hair, they shouted out either incomprehensible or ambiguous utterances and produced a powerful impression on people who insistently demanded answers from them. The contemporary sectarians – the khlysty, the Pentecostalists – are like them. The Apostle warns the Christians against a pagan approach and attitude to spiritual gifts."[160]

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[159] Rose, *Orthodoxy and the Religion of the Future*, Platina, Ca.: St. Herman of Alaska Monastery, 1983, pp. 148-149.

[160] Averky, *Rukovodstvo k izucheniu Sviaschennago Pisania Novago Zaveta* (Guide to the Study of the Sacred Scriptures of the New Testament), Jordanville, N.Y.: Holy Trinity Monastery, 1987, p. 225. In illustration of this point, we may cite the anecdote told in the 1970s by the MP's Metropolitan Anthony (Bloom) of Sourozh. He was once invited to a Protestant prayer meeting. During the prayer, one of the participants stood up and started speaking in a foreign tongue with great ardour. Metropolitan Anthony was impressed… However, at this point someone who was passing outside the room stopped at the door, listened for a while and then said: "Stop him! I happen to know the language he is speaking in. It is Basque. And he is worshipping Satan!"

## *SUPER-ECUMENISM (1)*

"Inspired" by Pentecostalism, the ecumenists now plunged into the much broader sphere of inter-religious relations – that is, into "Super-Ecumenism". For the so-called "age of the Spirit", ignoring the voice of the Spirit: "Be ye not unequally yoked with unbelievers, for… what concord hath Christ with Belial?" (II Corinthians 6.14-15), invited to reunion not only Christians of all denominations but also members of all the other religions. Thus in 1970 the Pentecostal Pope Paul VI spoke of "the Hebrew and Islamic peoples, and Christians… these three expressions of an *identical* [my italics – V.M.] monotheism", and confessed that "we are all sons of the same Father, and,… therefore, all brothers".[161] Evidently he did not know the words of the Apostle John: "Whosoever denieth the Son [and both Jews and Mohammedans deny the Son], the same hath not the Father" (I John 2.23). Nor those of the Lord Himself: "No man cometh unto the Father but by Me" (John 14.6).

Another important influence, paradoxically, on Catholic ecumenism was the ecumenism of the Russian religious philosophers such as Soloviev and Berdiaev. Thus Patriarch Athenagoras noted the influence of Berdiaev on one of the architects of the Second Vatican Council, Cardinal Jean Daniélou, as well as on himself.[162] And in a speech made on December 12, 1992, Pope John-Paul II said: "I confess the same Christian faith as was the faith of Soloviev."[163]

Catholic Super-Ecumenism was set in motion by the Second Vatican Council's decree, Nostra Aetate (Declaration on the Relations of the Church to Non-Christian Religions, October 28, 1965): "Even though the Jewish authorities and those who followed their lead pressed for the death of Christ, neither all Jews indiscriminately at that time, nor Jews today, can be charged with the crimes committed during his passion." And yet the Jewish religion to this day justifies the killing of Christ, saying that He was a magician and His Mother a prostitute!

The Orthodox were not far behind the Catholics, especially in relation to the Mohammedans. Thus in 1970, "the WCC sponsored a conference in Ajaltoun, Lebanon, between Hindus, Buddhists, Christians and Moslems, and a follow-up conference of 23 WCC 'theologians' in Zurich in June declared the need for 'dialogue' with the non-Christian religions. At the meeting of the Central Committee of the WCC at Addis Ababa in January of this year, Metropolitan Georges Khodre of Beirut (Orthodox Church of Antioch) shocked even many Protestant delegates when he not merely called for 'dialogue' with these religions, but left the Church of Christ far behind and trampled on 19 centuries of Christian tradition when he called on Christians to 'investigate the authentically spiritual life of the unbaptized' and enrich their own experience with the 'riches of a universal religious community' (*Religious New Service*), for 'it is Christ alone who is received as light when grace visits a

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[161] *La Croix,* August 11, 1970.

[162] Olivier Clément, *Conversations with Patriarch Athenagoras*, in V.M. Lourié, "The Ecclesiology of a Retreating Army", *Vertograd-Inform*, January, 1999, p. 25, note.

[163] *Irénikon*, 1993, vol. 66, p. 526; in . Lourié, op. cit.

Brahmin, a Buddhist, or a Moslem reading his own scriptures' (*Christian Century*, February 10, 1971)."[164] Evidently the Metropolitan had forgotten that "all the gods of the heathen are demons" (Psalm 95.5)…

In 1975 the Orthodox delegates at the WCC General Assembly in Nairobi declared: "The Orthodox do not expect the other Christians to be converted to Orthodoxy in its historic and cultural reality of the past and the present and to become members of the Orthodox Church."

As the 1970s and 1980s progressed talk of unity was succeeded by action, and communal services not only between Christians of different denominations, but also between Christians and non-Christians, became common. Thus on June 29, 1980, in Atlanta, Georgia, the Greek Archbishop James of New York served an "unprecedented" ecumenical service with various Catholics, Protestants and even Jews... Even clergy of Serbian Patriarchate were conducting ecumenical services with the participation of heterodox clerics and even rabbis and women. On January 22, 1981, the Ecumenical Press Service reported that the WCC was working on plans to unify all the Christian denominations into a single new religion which, the ecumenists hoped, would be generally accepted. To this end, a "preliminary plateau" was to be formed which would consolidate existing agreements between the churches. This would then lead to the formation of a universal council which would become a single body with sufficient authority to formulate a new confession of the apostolic faith![165]

Also clear by this time was the *politicisation* of the WCC along the lines of the Moscow-inspired "movement for peace", as we can see from a cursory reading of the titles of the public statements of the 33rd and 34th sessions of the Central Committee of the WCC in 1981 and 1982: "The Churches and the Refugee Crisis", "Statement on Namibia", "Increased Threats to Peace and the Task of the Churches", "Statement on South African Government Raids on Squatter Camps", "On Northern Ireland", "Statement on the Second Special Session of the United Nations General Assembly on Disarmament", "Statement on Lebanon", "Statement on Extrajudicial Executions".[166]

In 1982 the MP convened a conference entitled "Religious workers for saving the sacred gift of life from nuclear catastrophe" in Moscow. It disclaimed any attempt "to produce some common syncretistic religion". Nevertheless, the message implicit in its gathering of representatives of all the world's religions under the chairmanship of the MP was that material prosperity is more important than truth.[167]

Again, Fr. Lev Gillet highlighted the so-called "ecumenism of the concentration camps". "For it was in such places as Buchenwald, Dachau and Auschwitz (not to

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[164] Rose, op. cit., pp. 15-16.
[165] *Newsletter,* op. cit., pp. 2, 6-7.
[166] *Zhurnal Moskovskoj Patriarkhii* (Journal of the Moscow Patriarchate), 1981, № 12; 1982, № 10.
[167] *Zhurnal Moskovskoj Patriarkhii* (Journal of the Moscow Patriarchate), 1982, № 11.

mention the camps of the Stalinist world)", writes Fr. Sergius Hackel, "That 'Christians belonging to different Churches discovered through their common sufferings and their burning charity a deep unity at the foot of the cross'. Furthermore, 'this ecumenism had its witnesses, its martyrs'. And Fr. Lev mentions three to represent them all: the Protestant pastor Dietrich Bonhoeffer (1906-45), the Catholic priest Josef Metzger (1887-1944), and the Orthodox nun Maria Skobtsova (1891-1945). 'All three were killed for Christ, all three were witnesses for the ecumenical fellowship of blood which is expressed in this sentence from the [1943] testament of Metzger: 'I feel myself as closely united to my believing and conscientious Protestant brothers in Christ Jesus through Baptism and our common experience in the same Lord, as to the brethren with whom I share the fellowship of the Holy Sacrament'. The symbolic lighting of candles in the chapel of the twentieth-century martyrs in Canterbury Cathedral at the outset of Pope John Paul's visit to Great Britain (in 1982) was, among other things, a reminder of what such ecumenism can mean."[168] But if Orthodox, Catholics and Protestants who suffered at the hands of the Nazis were all martyrs, what about the victims of the Jewish holocaust? Soon the industry of the holocaust would be compelling Christian leaders to pay homage also to these "martyrs", whose religion of the Talmud breathes the most extreme hatred of Christ and Christians![169]

In fact, the concept of martyrdom exposes ecumenism for the lie that it is. For if all religions are holy and equal, then so are their martyrs. But this is impossible. For then Jews who are killed by Muslims are as "holy" as Muslim suicide bombers. And Jews who suffer at the hands of Christians are as holy as Christians who suffer at the hands of Jews. And Catholics who suffer at the hands of Nazis and Stalinists are as holy as Orthodox who suffer at the hands of Catholics. And Orthodox who die for Sovietism and the Soviet church (i.e. in the MP) are as holy as Orthodox who die against Sovietism and against the Soviet church…

[168] Hackel, Editorial, *Sobornost,* vol. 5, № 1, 1983, p. 5.

[169] In proof of this, persecution of Christians in Israel has continued. Thus in November, 1979 Archimandrite Philoumenos, guardian of Jacob's Well for the Jerusalem Patriarchate took shelter when a group of people, believed to be fanatical Zionists, broke into the monastery and attacked him with hatchets. His face was cloven in two, his eyes plucked out and the fingers of his right hand, used to make the sign of the cross, were chopped into pieces. No one was ever arrested for the murder, which took place a week after a Zionist group had come to the monastery claiming that it was a Jewish holy place and demanding that all the crosses and other religious iconography be removed. His body was later found to be incorrupt ("The Slaying of Archimandrite Philoumenos", *Orthodox Life,* vol. 30, № 5, November-December, 1980).

## *THE ANATHEMA AGAINST ECUMENISM*

Two ecumenical events combined to elicit a powerful response from the True Orthodox Church. The first took place in 1982, when an inter-denominational eucharistic service was composed at a conference in Lima, Peru, in which the Protestant and Orthodox representatives to the WCC agreed that the baptism, eucharist and ordinations of *all* denominations were valid and acceptable.[170] The second came in 1983, at the Vancouver General Assembly of the WCC, which began with a pagan rite performed by local Indians and contained prayer services in which Orthodox hierarchs as well as representatives of many non-Christian religions took part.

The Vancouver Assembly unanimously approved a statement entitled "My Neighbor's Faith and Mine, Theological Discoveries Through Interfaith Dialogue: A Study Guide" (Geneva: WCC, 1986). After claiming the need "a more adequate theology of religions," the statement declared "that in Jesus Christ, the incarnate Word, the entire human family has been united to God in an irrevocable bond and covenant. The saving presence of God's activity in all creation and human history comes to its focal point in the event of Christ. . . because we have seen and experienced goodness, truth, and holiness among followers of other paths and ways than that of Jesus Christ..., we find ourselves recognizing a need to move beyond a theology which confines salvation to the explicit personal commitment to Jesus Christ."

When the Greek Old Calendarist Metropolitan Gabriel of the Cyclades attempted to address the Vancouver Assembly, he was not allowed to speak by the ecumenists. The *New York Times*, however, published his report, which included the following words: "Modern ecumenism is the reflection of the latest radical, atheistic and anti-Christian anthropomorphism which has as its principle that God is as necessary to man as man is to God. This radical anthropomorphism continues to struggle through the WCC to make the salvific message of Christ simply a servile element of the socio-political and earthly needs of man Thus it struggles for the actualisation of the unity of the Christian world without Christ, who is 'the Way, the Truth and the Life' of the Church and the faithful. Dogmatic and ethical minimalism, spiritual nihilism, humanistic pacifism and horizontal social activism lead to a union of the Christian world without Christ. So these attempts of the WCC constitute the modern blasphemy of the Holy Spirit par excellence and declare a deep crisis of faith in the Western Christian world…"[171]

The Synod of ROCOR, also meeting in Canada, condemned this latest and most extreme manifestation of ecumenism as follows: "In its decision of 28 July / 10

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[170] See Archbishop Vitaly, "The 1983 Sobor of Bishops", *Orthodox Christian Witness*, August 20 / September 2, 1984, p. 4.

[171] "Orthodox Reactions to the Aims of the World Council of Churches", *The New York Times*, August 16, 1983. Minor changes have been made in the wording of the article, which was obviously translated from the Greek by a non-native English speaker.

August, our Council explained that the Russian Orthodox Church Outside Russia does not participate in the World Council of Churches insofar as the latter attempts to represent those assembled in it, representatives of religions differing in their opinions, as though they had some sort of unity in faith. In reality, though, this very position is a lie, inasmuch as they, members of various confessions and sects, have not given up their points of disagreement with each other, much less with the Orthodox Church, in dogmas and in fundamental attitudes. In the name of unifying formulas, these differences of opinion are not destroyed, but are just set aside. Instead of the unshakable truths of the faith, they try to see only opinions, not obligatory for anyone. In reply to the confession of the one Orthodox Faith, they say together with Pilate: 'What is truth?' And the nominally Orthodox members of the Ecumenical Movement more and more deserve the reproach of the Angel of the Church of Laodicea: 'I know your works: you are neither hot nor cold: O if only you were hot or cold' (Revelation 3.15). A clear manifestation of such false union was the serving of the so-called Lima Liturgy…"

Then the Synod anathematised ecumenism, declaring: "To those who attack the Church of Christ by teaching that Christ's Church is divided into so-called 'branches' which differ in doctrine and way of life, or that the Church does not exist visibly, but will be formed in the future when all 'branches' or sects or denominations, and even religions will be united in one body; and who do not distinguish the priesthood and mysteries of the Church from those of the heretics, but say that the baptism and eucharist of heretics is effectual for salvation; therefore to those who knowingly have communion with these aforementioned heretics or advocate, disseminate , or defend their new heresy of Ecumenism under the pretext of brotherly love or the supposed unification of separated Christians, **Anathema**."[172]

The Anathema against Ecumenism was seized upon with delight by the True Orthodox not only in ROCOR, but also in Greece and on Mount Athos, and may be considered the single most important ecclesiastical act of the True Orthodox Church in the second half of the twentieth century. For many who had been worried that ROCOR was not being firm and clear enough in her dealings with the ecumenists, it put an end to their doubts and reaffirming their faith in her at a time when the Greek Old Calendarist Church was going through a very difficult period. However, the anathema did not spell out precisely which bodies fell under it and were therefore outside the True Church; and this weakness was exploited by those who, for one reason or another, did not want to see a clear and unambiguous frontier marked out between the Church of Christ and the Church of the Antichrist.[173]

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[172] See "A Contemporary Patristic Document", *Orthodox Christian Witness*, November 14/27, 1983, p. 3; "Encyclical Letter of the Council of Bishops of the Russian Orthodox Church Outside Russia", *Orthodox Life*, vol. 33, № 6, November-December, 1983, p. 13; Bishop Hilarion of Manhattan, "Answers to Questions Posed by the Faithful of the Orthodox Parish in Somerville, South Carolina", Sunday of the Myrrhbearers, 1992.

[173] See "Epi Enos Anathematos" (On An Anathema), *Kirix Gnision Orthodoxon (Herald of the True Orthodox Christians)*, February, 1984, pp. 47-56.

Nevertheless, the implication of this anathema was clear: all Orthodox Churches that were fully participating members of the WCC fell under it. As I.M. writes: "There is no heresy without heretics and their practical activity. The WCC in its declarations says: The Church confesses, the Church teaches, the Church does this, the Church does that. In this way the WCC witnesses that it does not recognize itself to be simply a council of churches, but the one church. And all who are members of the WCC are members of this one false church, this synagogue of Satan. And by this participation in the WCC all the local Orthodox churches fall under the ROCOR anathema of 1983 and fall away from the True Church. In their number is the Moscow Patriarchate…"[174]

ROCOR priest Alexander Lebedev attacked the validity of the anathema, calling the idea that the anathema strikes down all ecumenists "the heresy of universal jurisdiction".

The present writer replied to Fr. Alexander: "… It seems to me that you confuse two things: the Church as an external organisation, and the Church as a mystical organism, to use the terminology of Hieromartyr Catacomb Bishop Mark (Novoselov) (+1938). It seems to me that you are right as regards the Church as an external organisation, but wrong as regards the Church as a mystical organism. Let me explain.

"An anathema excludes the person anathematised from the holy mysteries, from membership of the Holy Church. In the first place, of course, that applies to the local Church of which that person is a member. It applies to other Churches only to the extent that the leaders of those other Churches agree with the original anathema and "sign up to it", as it were. Thus the heretic Arius was originally anathematized by the Bishop of Alexandria, which meant that he was excluded from receiving the sacraments throughout the Church of Alexandria. However, not all the bishops of neighbouring Churches agreed with this anathema, so Arius was able to receive communion in other Local Churches. To this extent the anathema was only of local significance. It required the convening of the First Ecumenical Council before Arius was anathematized "universally" - and even then, the anathema was not universally received, as the history of the Church in the next fifty years demonstrates.

"It is a different matter when we consider an anathema sub specie aeternitatis, in its mystical, super-terrestrial significance. From that point of view, the anathematization of a heretic begins in the heavens. Thus even before Arius had been "locally" anathematized by St. Alexander of Alexandria, the Lord appeared to his predecessor, St. Peter, with a torn cloak, and in answer to St. Peter's question: "O Creator, who has torn Thy tunic?", replied: "The mindless Arius; he has separated from Me people whom I had obtained with My Blood" (St. Demetrius of Rostov, *Lives of the Saints*, November 25). So not only Arius, but all those who followed him,

[174] "Iskazhenie dogmata 'O edinstve Tserkvi' v ispovedaniakh very Sinodom i Soborom Russkoj Pravoslavnoj Tserkvi Zagranitsej " (Distortion of the Dogma 'On the Unity of the Church' in the Confessions of Faith of the Synod and Sobor of the Russian Orthodox Church Abroad) (MS).

had been separated from the Church by the anathema of Her First Bishop, the Lord Jesus Christ, years (or rather, aeons) before even the first "local" anathema had been uttered. All heresies and heretics are anathematized "from all eternity" by the eternal Lord, for just as every truth is approved by the Truth Himself from all eternity, so is every lie condemned by Him from all eternity, being condemned with "the father of lies" to the gehenna of fire (Revelation 22.15).

"The task of hierarchs on earth is to discern the decisions of the heavenly Church, and then apply these heavenly decisions on earth, in space and time. As St. Bede the Venerable (+735) writes: "The keys of the Kingdom designate the actual knowledge and power of discerning who are worthy to be received into the Kingdom, and who should be excluded from it as being unworthy" (Sermon on the Feast of Saints Peter and Paul, *P.L.* 94, col. 219). From this point of view, it matters not a jot whether a heretic is anathematized locally or universally, since he has already been anathematized by the heavenly Church. Or rather, it matters in this sense: that if the heretic has been anathematized locally, but this anathema is not accepted by the rest of the Church, then the rest of the Church is under the grave danger of falling under this same anathema. For the local anathema, if it is just, is the reflection of a heavenly anathema; and the anathema of the heavenly Church is universal….

"This explains why, when local Churches anathematized a heresy, they never qualified the anathema (as you, Fr. Alexander, would like to qualify ROCOR's anathema against ecumenism) by saying: "but of course, this applies only to the heretics in our local Church". On the contrary: history shows that local Churches freely anathematized heretics, not only in their own Churches, but also in others. Thus Nestorius, a heretic of the Church of Constantinople, was first condemned by a local Synod of the Church of Rome under St. Celestine; the Monothelite heretics were first condemned by a local Synod, again, of the Church of Rome; and the Papist heretics were first condemned by a local Synod of the Church of Constantinople.

"Consider what St. Maximus said of the Monothelites: "In addition to having excommunicated themselves from the Church, they have been deposed and deprived of the priesthood at the local council which took place recently in Rome. What Mysteries, then, can they perform? Or what spirit will descend upon those who are ordained by them?" Note that the saint says that the heretics have excommunicated themselves; for as the Apostle Paul writes, "he that is such is subverted, and sins, being condemned of himself" (Titus 3.11). But the heretics' self-condemnation and self-exclusion from the Church as a mystical organism must be followed by their exclusion from the Church as an external organization, lest others be infected with their heresy. Hence the need for councils of bishops to anathematize them, following the rule: "A heretic after the first and second admonition reject" (Titus 3.10), and: "If he refuses to listen to the Church, let him be unto you as a heathen and a publican" (Matthew 18.17). And clearly St. Maximus considered that the anathema of the local Church of Rome had validity throughout the Ecumenical Church.

"Administrative matters and moral falls are the business of local Churches and councils. However, heresies of their very nature are of universal significance, having the potential to infect the whole Church. That is why the appearance of a heresy in one local Church is not the business only of that local Church, but of all the local Churches - and every local Church can and must anathematize it.

"Even the anathema of single bishopric has universal power and validity if it is uttered in the Holy Spirit, in accordance with the eternal Truth. Thus in 1069 the bishops of the metropolitanate of York, in the north of England, solemnly anathematized both the Pope of Rome and his stooge, William the conqueror, the first papist king of England. All the evidence is that they did not know that the Church of Constantinople had already anathematized Rome in 1054. So they were not simply confirming the word of a higher authority. They did not need a higher authority. They were successors of the apostles, with the power to bind and to loose. And they used that power, not for personal gain (on the contrary: they paid for their boldness with their lives), even against the most senior bishop in Christendom…

"In the same way, in 1983 the Sobor of Bishops of the Russian Church Abroad, using the power to bind and to loose given them by the Bishop of bishops, the Lord Jesus Christ, translated onto earth, into space and time, the completely binding and universally applicable decision already arrived at from all eternity by the Council of the Holy Trinity, the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. Ecumenism is, was and always will be a heresy, indeed "the heresy of heresies", and the ecumenist heretics are, were and always will be outside the Church, the mystical Body of Christ. The decision of the ROCOR Sobor in 1983, confirmed with no change to its universal wording in 1998, expelled these already self-condemned and Divinely condemned heretics also from the external organization of the Church - and woe to any man, of whatever Church, who despises that decision, for he will then surely fall under the same anathema…"[175]

One ROCOR hierarch rejected this decision – Archbishop Anthony of Geneva. Since 1974, as we have seen, he was the leader of the faction opposing any hardening of ROCOR's attitude towards "World Orthodoxy". Now he ordered the Paris Mission of ROCOR, led by Archimandrite Ambroise Frontier, to concelebrate with new calendarists, and not with Old Calendarists, when in Greece – which caused the whole mission to leave ROCOR and join the Greek Old Calendarists. He was even accused of concelebrating with Roman Catholics.[176] After the Paris mission left him,

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[175] V. Moss, "Re: [paradosis} The Heresy of Universal Jurisdiction", orthodox-tradition@egroups.com, October 12, 2000.

[176] Thus Matushka Susanna Maklakov writes: "Although the majority of bishops in the Russian Synod in the 80s were *not* in favor of ecumenism and ecumenistic policies (such as giving communion to RCs), Vladyka Anthony of Geneva persisted in this practice and practically ordered his priests to do so also. Fr. Andrew Maklakov was one of them. He of course got on the phone with Metropolitan Philaret and Bishop Gregory Grabbe, who assured him that this position was not correct and that he did not have to obey Archbishop Anthony. So Fr. Andrew defied AB Anthony of Geneva and refused to communicate RCs who asked for Holy Communion in the parishes that Fr. Andrew served in (which were Rome, Baden-Baden, Munich and Copenhagen). We were in Europe from April 1984

Archbishop Anthony began to distribute epistles and "explanations" written by him with the aim of justifying the concelebrations with clergy of the "official churches" that were taking place in his diocese.[177] Unfortunately, the ROCOR Synod was by now too weak to check his harmful influence…

Metropolitan Philaret was the only hierarch willing and able to fight for the True Orthodox confession against Archbishop Anthony. However, he had very few allies in the Synod. Even a conservative such as Bishop Gregory (Grabbe) would not go so far as him. As Bishop Gregory's daughter, Matushka Anastasia Shatilova, recalls:

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until June 1986. During that time, Fr. Andrew never communicated RCs and I am proud of him for his traditionalist Orthodox stance on that issue. Vladyka Anthony of Geneva is an ecumenist. Period. During that time, he was known to concelebrate with certain uniate groups in Rome, allowing seminarians and monastics on the kliros and into the altar freely. I know this firsthand and no one can convince me otherwise…" (personal communication to Fr. Daniel, November 9, 2005).

[177] Thus on April 10, 1987 he wrote: "The Hierarchical Synod [of ROCOR] is obliged with sorrow to warn its flock and those pastors who make themselves out to be *the only True Orthodox Christians* that the path of arbitrary self-rule that they have embarked upon will lead them out of the Church and into a sect.

"…. Alas, critics have also appeared in our diocese… They have demanded from us a reply to the question: do the clergy of the 'Synodal' Church concelebrate… with new calendarists and ecumenists? The aim of this question is to accuse *us* of the 'sin' of concelebration.

"…They were given the clear and definite reply that our Church has *always* had relations with, and continues to have relations with, the canonical Churches that have accepted the new calendar in the practice of the Divine services.

"Already in 1925, soon after the acceptance of the new calendar into ecclesiastical practice by five Orthodox Churches at the congress of 1925, the Romanian Church (one of the five) invited Metropolitan Anthony, the founder of our Church Abroad, to take part in the festivities of the enthronement of the Romanian Patriarch Miron [one of the main persecutors of True Orthodoxy in the 20th century!]

"…. On September 27, 1961 our Hierarchical Synod addressed the Greek Old Calendarists in a letter... 'Our Church keeps to the old calendar and considers the introduction of the new calendar to have been *a great mistake*. Nevertheless, her tactic was *always to preserve spiritual communion* with the Orthodox Churches who accepted the new calendar, *insofar as they celebrate Pascha in agreement with the decision of the First Ecumenical Council.… We have never broken spiritual communion with the canonical Churches in which the new calendar was introduced*.'…

"Our Hierarchical Councils and individual hierarchs have often repeated: *the new calendar is not a heresy*, but a great and crude mistake. On this basis, Metropolitan Philaret, on his frequent visits to France, has served Sunday Liturgies in the Romanian Church in Paris, praying with his new calendarist flock.

"Metropolitan Vitaly, faithful to his predecessors, writes in this year's Christmas epistle [1986/87]: 'At the given time the majority of local Churches have been shaken… by a double blow: the new calendar and ecumenism. However, even in their present wretched state, *we do not dare, and God forbid that we should do this, to say that they have lost the Grace of God*.'

"*We* permit to serve with *us* clerics of the Orthodox Serbian Church. Our metropolitans and bishops have done the same since they knew for certain that the Serbian Church, in the difficult conditions of the communist regime, has been able to preserve its inner freedom and, while being included officially in the ecumenical movement, has remained in essence outside it.

"… Archimandrite Justin [Popovich] often said with great firmness and wrote against ecumenism without separating from his patriarch [this is not true - Fr. Justin broke with the Serbian patriarch because of his ecumenism]. He had a huge influence on his flock, creating a whole movement of young monks who, in continuing his work, bring up young people in the spirit of Orthodoxy. It has been *our* lot to concelebrate with clergy of the Serbian Church very rarely, but each time *we* have done this with the joyful consciousness of our All-Orthodox unity…"

"[Metropolitan Philaret] had especially many quarrels with Archbishop Anthony of Geneva… mainly on ecumenist questions… with the Serbs, the Antiochians and all kinds… Unfortunately, Archbishop Anthony was distinguished for his very sharp character and wrote several very boorish letters, to which the Metropolitan replied a little sharply… Vladyka Gregory was distinguished by somewhat great diplomacy and was afraid that to speak in this way could create too great problems… [and] restrained the declarations of the Holy Hierarch Philaret concerning the lack of grace in the MP. For example, he used to say: '… tell 60 million Russian people that they are not chrismated, and have been baptized only according to the laymen's rite…" The Metropolitan was prepared to say this, but Vladyka Gregory thought that for the sake of Church construction it would be more correct not to put it so sharply…"[178]

[178] Quoted by Fr. Roman Pavlov.

## *THE DISINTEGRATION OF THE FLORINITE SYNOD*

In the early 1970s the Florinite Synod under Archbishop Auxentius, appeared to be in a strong position as a result of its union with ROCOR. At this point, however, Auxentius began ordaining unworthy men and receiving priests from the new calendarists whose reputation was already besmirched.[179] As a result, in 1974, following the commandment: "Be not partakers of other men's sins" (I Timothy 5.2)), Metropolitans Acacius of Diauleia, Gabriel of the Cyclades and Chrysostom (Kiousis) of Thessalonica stopped attending meetings of the Synod. Chrysostom left because Auxentius wanted to consecrate a bishop for Germany, Marcian, who had been caught red-handed without a rasa in the "red light" district of Athens.[180] These three bishops were joined by Bishop Peter of Astoria.[181]

Sadly, the process of disintegration did not stop there. In June, 1977, Metropolitan Callistus of Corinth, being unhappy with the Matthewites' break with the Russians and the Matthewites' rejection of the kheirothesia of 1971 (he was one of the two bishops who had secured the union with the Russians in 1971), broke communion with the Matthewites and joined the Holy Synod.[182] However, he was soon to rue his association with Auxentius. In 1978, a Portuguese priest of ROCOR, Joao Rocha, unhappy with Archbishop Anthony of Geneva's refusal to create a diocese in Portugal, applied to join the True Orthodox Church of Greece. To the fury of Archbishop Anthony, Archbishop Auxentius baptised and reordained him on the grounds that he was a convert who had never had Orthodox baptism[183] before consecrating him as Bishop Gabriel of Lisbon together with Metropolitan Callistus, who later claimed that he had been deceived.

Profoundly disillusioned with Auxentius, from February 20 to 23, 1979, Metropolitan Callistus, together with Metropolitan Anthony of Megara, ordained eight archimandrites to the episcopate, who were, in order of ordination: Cyprian (Koutsoubas) of Fili and Orope, Maximus (Tsitsibakos) of Magnesia, Callinicus (Sarantopoulos) of Achaia, Matthew (Langis) of Oinoe, Germanus (Athanasiou) of Aiolia, Calliopius (Giannakoulopoulos) of Pentapolis, Mercurius (Kaloskamis) of Knossos and Callinicus (Karaphyllakis) of the Twelve Islands.[184] During the services,

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[179] Lardas, op. cit., p. 20.

[180] Bishop Photius of Marathon, personal communication, June 28, 2003. After failing to receive ordination from Auxentius, Marcian left him and joined the Synod of Maximus Valianatos.

[181] This act was contested by Fr. Simon of Simonopetra monastery, Mount Athos, in view of Peter's refusal to sign the encyclical of 1974, after which, according to some sources, he was not only removed as exarch of America, but also as a member of the Synod. However, Metropolitans Chrysostom and Gabriel replied in *I Phoni tis Orthodoxias (The Voice of Orthodoxy)* that "our Hierarchy, meeting in the totality of its members, decided by a majority vote that the exarchate be taken from Bishop Peter of Astoria, without any decision being made that would forbid us serving with him."

[182] According to Holy Transfiguration Monastery, Boston, he acted thus "in protest over what he considered the Matthewite Synod's lack of good faith in the effort at reconciliation with the Holy Synod of Archbishop Auxentius" (*The Struggle against Ecumenism,* op. cit., p. 103).

[183] Although, according to Lardas (op. cit., p. 20), he had received chrismation in the ROCOR.

[184] According to Bishop Macarius of Petra (*1973-2003: Thirty Years of Ecclesiastical Developments: Trials-Captivity-Deliverance*, an unpublished report given to a clergy conference on May 8, 2000,

Archbishop Auxentius was commemorated; but they had not informed him. It was only on February 27 that they called Auxentius and asked for his approval. The "Callistites" claimed that this was only a "temporary and curable deviation from the canonical order" whose aim was the cleansing of the Church from moral vices, especially sodomy, since "men have been raised to the priesthood who are both unworthy and incapable."[185]

However, on March 21, 1980 the Callistite Synod ordained Holy Chrism. This was hardly the act of a Synod that considered itself a "temporary and curable deviation from the canonical order". Moreover, it entered into communion with another Local Church. Thus in 1979 it received Bishop Silvester as emissary of the True Orthodox Church of Romania, and decided, having examined both the circumstances of the case and the historical/canonical basis, synodically to recognise the validity of the consecration performed by Galaction alone, as of those that followed.[186] In April, 1980 the Callistites entered into official communion with the True Orthodox Church of Romania under the presidency of Metropolitan Glycerius.[187]

According to another version, however, in 1981 Metropolitan Callistus, together with Metropolitan Callinicus of Achaia and Metropolitan Cyprian of Fili went to Romania and performed the act of cheirothesia on the Romanian bishops in order to regularize their position. Later, when the Callistites, Auxentiites and Gerontiites united, this act was recognized by the united Church, as it is by the True Orthodox (Chrysostomite) Synod today.[188]

At 6 p.m. on February 27[189], the same day on which he was informed of the Callistite ordinations, Archbishop Auxentius met with Metropolitans Gerontius and Callinicus "in order to formulate a position on the sedition brought about by its members, Callistus of Corinth and Anthony of Megara, who illegally severed

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Metropolitan Anthony first travelled to Cyprus to ask the Matthewite Metropolitan Epiphanius to participate in the ordinations. He refused.

[185] For two antithetical accounts of this Synod, see *Phylakes Orthodoxias (Guardians of Orthodoxy)*, vol. 1, March, 1979, pp. 1-2 and *Agios Kyprianos (St. Cyprian)*, № 122, February, 1979, p. 240, on the one hand, and "Latest developments in the Church of the Genuine Orthodox Christians of Greece", special supplement to *Orthodox Christian Witness*, November, 1984, vol. XVIII, № 12 (*St. Nectarios Educational Series* № 93), Priest-Monk Haralampus (Book Review in *The True Vine*, № 21, vol. 6, № 1, 1994, pp. 56-63), and Holy Transfiguration Monastery, Boston, *The Struggle against Ecumenism*, pp. 102-112, on the other.

[186] Bishop Ambrose of Methone, personal communication, 2010.

[187] "Panigyrikon Sulleitourgon Ellinon kai Roumanon G.O.X." (Festive Concelebration of Greek and Romanians of the True Orthodox Christians), *Phylakes Orthodoxias (Guardians of Orthodoxy)*, № 9, November, 1979, pp. 72-74; Bishop Ambrose of Methone, personal communication, December 24, 2009.

[188] Bishop Photius of Marathon, personal communication, March 18, 2010. The cheirothesia was officially denied by the Romanian Synod in 2010. See http://mitropoliaslatioara.ro/stire.php?id=91.

[189] There is some confusion about the exact dates here. In *The Struggle against Ecumenism*, it is said that this meeting took place on February 14, and that the Callistites informed Auxentius of the ordinations in a letter also dated February 14 (but received on March 3. However, according to other sources, the Callistite ordinations took place between February 20 and 23, and that Auxentius was informed on February 27.

themselves from the body [of the Holy Synod] and high-handedly undertook to consecrate bishops. Upon discussing this matter at length, on the basis of the holy canons of the One, Holy, Catholic, and Apostolic Church of Christ, [the Holy Synod] unanimously decreed and imposed upon the two seditious Metropolitans the punishment of deposition, as the holy canons themselves enjoin. [The Holy Synod decrees] that this decision be released and published straightway in the Athenian press. Since there was no time to convoke the assembly of the clergy, upon deliberation, because of the gravity of the event, it decided this very day to consecrate new bishops for [the Holy Synod's] restoration and replenishment. Various points of view were exchanged and proposed by all the holy hierarchs…" Then, according to the minutes of the meeting, no less than *ten* new bishops were elected and ordained in the following order: Euthymius (Orphanos) of Stavropolis (later Thessalonica), Paisius (Loulourgas) of Gardikion (later of America), Theophilus (Tsirbas) of Christianoupolis (later Patras), Athanasius (Postalas) of Platamon (later Larissa), Maximus (Vallianatos) of the Seven Islands, Stephen (Tsikouras) of Kardamila (later Chios), Paisius (Phinikaliotis) of Aegina, Gerasimus (Vrakas) of Talantion (later Thebes), Athanasius (Haralambidis) of Grevena (later Acharnae) and Justin (Kouloutouros) of Marathon (later Euripus).

Some days later, the newly augmented Auxentiite Synod met in order to confirm the invalidity of the Callistite ordinations and the deposition of the Callistites as "conspirators, factionalists, establishers of unlawful assemblies and schismatics". Strangely, according to the minutes, while 13 bishops were present, only 8 signed the conciliar encyclical.[190] The bishops who were present but apparently did not sign were Gerontius, Callinicus, Stephen, Paisius of Gardikion and Paisius of Aegina. Another curious feature of the minutes of this meeting is that some of bishops had changed their titles from the list of those present to the list of those who signed the encyclical. [191]

But the strangest aspect of this Auxentiite "counter-coup" was the *extraordinary speed* with which it was accomplished. Three senior bishops *on one and the same day* (February 14 or 27): (1) heard of the Callistite ordinations, (2) met in order to condemn them and depose the Callistites, (3) drew up a list of 10 candidates for the episcopate, (4) assembled the 10 candidates (were they all waiting in the next room?), (5) obtained the permission of the two other members of the Synod, Paisius of Euripus and Acacius of Canada (this is not mentioned in the minutes, but Bishop Macarius assures us it happened), and (6) ordained them. Another source says that two of the new bishops (Athanasius of Larissa and Stephen of Chios) were ordained on one and the same day in different churches by different bishops.[192]

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[190] *I Phoni tis Orthodoxias (The Voice of Orthodoxy),* № 759, March 2, 1979.
[191] *The Struggle against Ecumenism,* op. cit., pp. 105-109.
[192] Bishop Photios of Marathon, *Chronicle of the Schism of 1995* (Woking, 2005, unpublished MS).

Even the extremely pro-Auxentiite Bishop (now Archbishop) Macarius admits, with almost British under-statement, "that Archbishop Auxentius did act in a rather hurried manner…"[193]

Thus the size (8 bishops), unexpectedness and uncanonicity of the Callistite coup was exceeded, if that were possible, by the still greater size (10 bishops), unexpectedness, uncanonicity – and extraordinary speed - of the Auxentiite counter-coup! The only explanation Bishop Macarius can give for this extraordinary speed - "things were in such a wild and unexpected state" – is weak, to say the least. A much more likely explanation is that the Auxentiite coup was not a wild reaction to a totally unexpected event, but a carefully planned reaction to an already foreseen event: the Auxentiites knew of the Callistite coup well in advance, and were therefore able to plan their own counter-coup well in advance, and put it into effect immediately they heard about the Callistite ordinations. In fact, there are some indications that Auxentius was not totally opposed to the Callistite coup, in that it "freed his hands"[194] to consecrate those whom *he* wanted as bishops – and of whom he knew that several of his bishops, the future Callistites, would not approve.

On the other hand, one of those newly ordained by Callistus, Callinicus of the Twelve Islands, claimed that the whole venture was planned by one of the newly-ordained bishops and his own spiritual father, Metropolitan Cyprian of Fili, without Auxentius' knowledge. Metropolitan Callinicus writes: "I was urgently summoned to Athens, knowing nothing about what was going on, and to my great surprise heard my Elder Cyprian tell me to prepare to be ordained to the episcopate during the vigil service that would begin in a short time. To the appropriate question of the writer why he himself (Fr. Cyprian) or this or that hieromonk (I mentioned a few names) should not be ordained, I learned that Fr. Cyprian as well as the other hieromonks I mentioned had already been ordained, and that Archbishop Auxentius was aware of the ordinations!"[195]

However, when all the bishops were in the sanctuary taking off their vestments, Cyprian said to one of them, "Now, how are we going to explain all this to Archbishop Auxentios?" Callinicus overheard this and realised that his spiritual father had lied to him. He believed that the whole venture was planned by Cyprian, and that he had deceived Callistus and Anthony into believing that Auxentius had given his permission.[196]

However, the Cyprianite Bishop Ambrose of Methone disagrees: "Having followed personally all the events in question, I can assure you that Metropolitan Cyprian had absolutely nothing to do with the planning of the ordinations; indeed,

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[193] Bishop Macarius, op. cit.
[194] Bishop Photius, op. cit.
[195] Metropolitan Callinicus of the Twelve Islands, in Bishop Macarius, op. cit. The Cyprianites continue to maintain that Archbishop Auxentius knew of and blessed the ordinations.
[196] Bishop Gregory of Denver, Re: Re[2]: [paradosis] Kallistos Metropolitan of Korinthos, orthodox-tradition@yahoogroups.com, 31/07/02.

though he had very friendly relations with Metropolitan Callistus, he had up to that time never met Metropolitan Anthony. He consulted the brotherhood, and his confessor, Archimandrite Ambroise Frontier, before accepting the proposition of the two metropolitans. He was in fact opposed to some of the candidates proposed, but was not in a position to veto them."[197]

While it seems very unlikely that Auxentius gave his permission (here we agree with Bishop Macarius), it is equally unlikely, for the reasons given above, that Auxentius did not know what was going to happen. Probably both sides knew already, before their split, that the candidates to the episcopate of the one side would not be acceptable to the other; so *both* sides prepared coups.

From a tactical point of view, Callistus and Anthony made a serious mistake when they "jumped the gun" and carried out their ordinations first. For their admittedly uncanonical act, however good the motivation (the cleansing of the Church from the tares sown by Auxentius), was made to appear as black as night, and the storm it raised covered the still more daring and uncanonical counter-coup of the Auxentiites…

The Callistite Synod also tried to approach ROCOR, but was rebuffed. The ROCOR resolution of May 11, 1980 declared: "Metropolitan Callistus, accompanied by Bishops Cyprian, Matthew and Calliopius, arrived to personally attend the session of the Synod of Bishops. They greeted the First Hierarch and the members of the Synod and reported on the grievous internal state of the Church of the True Orthodox Christians which is the result, they say, of improper measures taken by Archbishop Auxentius in directing the life of the Church which have led to a rift in relations with the Russian Orthodox Church Outside of Russia. They cited as examples irregular ordinations, regarding which Metropolitan Callistus asked for forgiveness for having taken part in the ordination of John Rosha as bishop of Portugal, explaining that he had done so on the bais of incorrect information imparted to him by Archbishop Auxentius. Archbishop Auxentius, in Metropolitan Callistus' words, has not only caused a break in relations with the Russian Church, but has also spread disorder in his own Church by supporting the abbess who has written a book against the holy hierarch Nectarius of Pentapolis. Later he performed many unnecessary ordinations without examining the candidates sufficiently. In making his decisions, Archbishop Auxentius has ignored all of his bishops with the exception of Metropolitan Gerontius. Performing the ordination of John Rosha, Archbishop Auxentius misled (the concelebrating hierarchs), saying that Archbishop Anthony of Geneva had not only given John a canonical release, but was even going to take part in his ordination. After discovering the true state of affairs, several members of their Synod proposed writing a letter of explanation to the Russian Synod of Bishops, but Archbishop Auxentius would not consent to this.

"Archbishop Callistus finds preservation of relations with the Russian Orthodox Outside of Russia absolutely essential. In view of this, he and Bishop Anthony of

[197] Bishop Ambrose, personal communication, November 10, 2005.

Megara decided to separate themselves from Archbishop Auxentius and ordained eight bishops for the administration of the Church, dividing the Church into dioceses. They are petitioning for the restoration of communion.

"Archbishop Auxentius, on his part, has addressed the Synod of Bishops in a letter dated April 12, accusing Archbishop Callistus and Bishop Anthony of Megara of perpetrating a schism.

"*RESOLVED.* Lovingly honouring the podvig of our brethren who have suffered considerably in Greece for their defence of the True Orthodox Faith, the Synod of Bishops of the Russian Orthodox Church Outside of Russia is deeply saddened that division reigns among them. The simultaneous appel of both Archbishop Auxentius and Archbishop Callistus to his Eminence Metropolitan Philaret bears witness to the depth of the divergence between them. The Russian bishops have no authority to investigate local problems in Greece in detail, much less mutual accusations. And so the Synod of Bishops, as early as 1976, resolved to remain aloof from any decisions and interference in the internal affairs of the Church in Greece. Moreover, for a comprehensive decision in favour of one or the other party, a detailed study of each accusation and the circumstances attendant thereon would be necessary, which seems impractical for the Synod of Bishops. Even less are the Russian bishops able to investigate the regularity of the many ordinations of bishops now performed.

"However, there is no doubt that several ordinations which have been performed by Archbishop Auxentius, especially in the recent past, and which have caused a change in our mutual relations, have entailed serious violations of the canons of the Church and could serve as a basis of an ecclesiastical trial against those who performed them. The ordination of bishops performed by him without need and without such bishops having diocesan territory especially gives rise to doubts and suspicions.

"The Synod of Bishops understands the anxiety of Metropolitan Callistus and values his concern for the preservation of communion with the Russian Orthodox Church Outside of Russia, as well as his desire to establish genuine ecclesiastical peace and canonical order in Greece. Without doubt, however, such order will never be established until all bishops ordained under dubious circumstances are removed. It would be best then for all bishops who are above suspicion to assemble in order to divide the dioceses among themselves according to territory; and the remaining bishops should be content to go into retirement.

"Only after the removal of all bishops suspected of canonical crimes can a beginning be made for a correct canonical organization of the True Orthodox Church in Greece which would attract to itself and unite all those clergy and laity who are seeking a normal ecclesiastical order.

"Be that as it may, having no authority for the Council to resolve problems which arise in Church life in Greece, the Synod of Bishops will watch all that goes on there

attentively, offering up prayers that the Lord will help our Greek brethren to set aright the correct canonical order of life which would make possible the restoration of normal relations with them…"

Metropolitans Acacius and Chrysostom disapproved of both the coup and the counter-coup, but were especially scathing about Auxentius' new ordinations. As they wrote: "The 'three hierarchs' (the archbishop and the metropolitans of Piraeus and Phthiotis) blatantly and scandalously nourished for years the ground for the creation of suitable conditions for the ordination… of people who do not have a good external or internal image… You removed Synodal hierarchs for no other reason than that they sought moral and legal order in the Church administration and the cleansing of the clergy… You displayed unbelievable vengefulness against those hierarchs who rebuked your iniquities… You ordained without any examination the uneducated, the elderly and paralysed and other who were weighed down by accusations concerning moral and other crimes of which they had been officially charged in the Holy Synod… We judge your act to be worse than the uncanonical act of Bishops Anthony and Callistus…" These words were probably aimed especially at Bishop Euthymius, as we shall see later…

Notwithstanding this fierce rebuke, the Auxentiite Synod made several approaches to Metropolitans Acacius and Chrysostom. But the latter resisted these blandishments, believing that their concerns for the cleansing of the Church had not been addressed. However, on January 28, 1980, the two metropolitans addressed a letter to Auxentius entitled "The Correct Road that will lead out of the Dead-End", in which they suggested that ROCOR be asked to act as mediators between the "Callistites" and "Auxentiites".

And they put forward a second suggestion in case this first one was rejected: "that all the bishops should abdicate. We shall all live private lives from now on… Three hieromonks known for their morality, decency and faith, preferably from Mount Athos, should be ordained as bishops to feed and administer the Church by those bishops who took no part in the coups. In this way all the divisions, personality struggles and counter-accusations will cease, and the troubled people of the True Orthodox Christians will be united… We personally, for the sake of the Church and the spiritual unity of the flock, will be the first to give our places over to the new spiritual leaders and live private lives. We pray that all the others will follow us…"[198]

It is a pity that neither of these suggestions was acted upon. Instead, on September 16, the Auxentiite Synod removed Metropolitan Chrysostom from his see in Thessalonica and on October 23 raised Bishop Euthymius to the rank of metropolitan to take his place. However, the majority of the flock in Northern Greece continued to remain faithful to Metropolitan Chrysostom; and on November 23 tens

[198] Metropolitans Acacius and Chrysostom, in Bishop Macarius, op. cit.

of priests from Katerini to Messoropi to Sidirokastron left the Auxentiites and joined Metropolitan Chrysostom.[199]

In 1981 the Auxentiite Synod removed the penalties it had imposed on Metropolitans Acacius and Chrysostom. Then, in the next year, it reimposed them. Then the Synod itself split, with one part remaining with Auxentius and the other following the leadership of Metropolitan Gerontius of Piraeus. Bishop Macarius, who likes to dwell in detail on all the other divisions, passes this one over very hastily: "In the meantime a division broke out, the Lord alone knows for what reason He allowed it, in the canonical [according to Macarius: Auxentiite] Holy Synod. I don't think it is necessary to spend any more time on this short division…"[200]

However, this "short division" related to an issue that was to become increasingly important – that of the *legal corporations*. Now this issue was important because Churches as such are not registered in Greece with the single exception of the new calendarist State Church. So the only way any religious community can acquire legal status and some legal protection (apart from the general protection provided by freedom of worship) is through registering as an association, corporation or foundation.[201]

Bishop Photius writes: "In the beginning, there existed the corporation 'The General Fund of the Church of the True Orthodox Christians of Greece', which had control of about 25 churches. It was under the control of the Auxentiite-Gerontians, who in the period 1971-1976 had removed from the board the four hierarchs – Acacius, Auxentius, Peter and Gabriel – who disagreed with them. In 1979, with the coup, the Auxentiite-Gerontians removed from the 'General Fund' all those who had taken part in the coup. Thus Callistus of Corinth, Anthony of Megara, Cyprian of Orope, Maximus of Magnesia, Callinicus of Achaia, Matthew of Oinoe, Germanus of Aiolia, Calliopius of Pentapolis, Mercurius of Knossus and Callinicus of the Twelve Islands were removed from the board of the 'General Fund' and founded the corporation 'the Greek Church of the True Orthodox Christians'. More accurately: they were inscribed into an already existing corporation having the same name, which had been founded by Calliopius many years before.[202]

"In June, 1983, the hierarchs Maximus of Magnesia (from now on 'of Demetrias') and Callinicus of the Twelve Islands left the Antonio-Callistites and joined the Auxentiites. They were received through cheirothesia (whose content must have been a simple prayer of forgiveness).[203] The same happened later with Germanus of Aiolia. These three were removed from the corporation 'The Greek Church of the

[199] Bishop Macarius, op. cit.
[200] Bishop Macarius, op. cit.
[201] Bishop Photius, personal communication, October 20, 2005.
[202] In 1961, according to Bishop Macarius, op. cit. (V.M.)
[203] This I heard from the two hierarchs Maximus and Callinicus themselves (Bishop Photius).

True Orthodox Christians'. The Auxentiite-Gerontians did not inscribe them into the 'General Fund'.

"In the same year a struggle broke out between the Auxentiites and Gerontius for the control of the 'General Fund'. Gerontius emerged as the winner from the struggle…"[204]

The Callistites also began to split up, over the old question whether the new calendarists had valid sacraments or not. As we have seen, in 1983 three metropolitans – Maximus, Germanus and Callinicus of the Twelve Islands – joined Auxentius. In 1984 four other metropolitans – Anthony, Callinicus of Achaia, Matthew and Calliopius – joined the Gerontians. Meanwhile, Metropolitan Cyprian was giving communion to new calendarists on the grounds that the new calendarist church was "not yet condemned" and therefore still the "Mother Church" of the Old Calendarists.[205] And he rejected Metropolitan Callistus' ecclesiology, saying that it was "without witness, unproven, anti-patristic, and hence un-Orthodox".[206] In other words, he regarded Callistus' views to be heretical – even if he did not use the word "heretical" for diplomatic reasons. This disillusioned Metropolitan Callistus, who had always maintained the official view of the True Orthodox Church of Greece since 1935 that the new calendarists had no sacraments. So he retired to his monastery, where he died in isolation in 1986…[207]

[204] Bishop Photius, op. cit.

[205] The evidence is in *The Struggle against Ecumenism,* op. cit., pp. 111-112.

[206] *Agios Kiprianos*, July, 1983, p. 210.

[207] However, the Cyprianite Bishop Ambrose of Methone writes: "The retirement of Metropolitan Callistus had nothing to do with our position on the admission of new calendarists to the Mysteries (in a much less liberal way than that of many others, e.g. Metropolitan Anthony). It was in fact occasioned by (a) the behaviour of Metropolitan Callinicus of Achaia, who refused to leave the convent in Athikia and go to his own diocese, despite repeated promises, and finally more or less expelled Metropolitan Callistus from the Convent he had himself founded, and (b) the unanimous outrage of all the members of the Synod over a pamphlet expressing the most extreme 'Matthaist' positions, which Callistus published and distributed without their knowledge. Having been expelled from his own home, he was taken in by his brother, Archimandrite Nicodemus, and lived the rest of his days as a guest at the convent of Agia Marini, Sofikon" (personal communication, November 10, 2005).

## *THE ITALIAN AND PORTUGUESE CHURCHES*

In June, 1984, Auxentius ordained a second Portuguese bishop, James, without the knowledge of part of his Synod. "Auxentius had promised his clergy that he would call them and listen to their opinions before any episcopal ordination. Therefore, in order to bring about this ordination, he summoned a few of them (those whom he wanted) and decided, in spite of the reasonable objections of two or three clerics, that Hieromonk James should be elected as assistant bishop to Bishop Gabriel of Lisbon."[208]

Not content with this uncanonicity, Auxentius proceeded to another. "Both Auxentius and Gabriel had promised before God, the hierarchs and the priests present at that time that James would remain as Gabriel's assistant, so that he would not be able to take part in the ordination of another bishop with Gabriel. However, in October, 1984, we were informed to our astonishment that the two Portuguese 'bishops' had ordained yet another Portuguese bishop and two Italians, with the blessings and prayers of Auxentius," [209] and the participation of Metropolitans Gerasimus, Maximus, Germanus and Athanasius of Larissa. One of the new bishops, the Italian Gabriel of Aquileia, turned out to be a fervent supporter, if not worshipper, of the fascist dictator Mussolini![210]

Moreover, Auxentius – acting *completely on his own* this time, now gave this new group a "Tome of Autonomy"![211]

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[208] *Orthodoxos Khristianikos Agon (Orthodox Christian Struggle),* № 3, November, 1985, p. 4.

[209] *Orthodoxos Khristianikos Agon (Orthodox Christian Struggle),* № 3, November, 1985, p. 4.

[210] "A few months ago, moreover, a Greek student from Rome sent us a letter… containing eight pages from the distinguished Italian periodical *Oggi* of January 9, 1985, which refers to one of the two Italian bishops, Gregory [Baccolini] of Aquileia, who was ordained by the oath-breaking 'Bishop' Gabriel of Lisbon. It is worthy of note that Auxentius did not forget to weave an encomium for the Portuguese and Italian bishops so as to pacify his devoted clerics, who had themselves been troubled by the startling 'ordinations' of the European 'bishops' of the True Orthodox Christians.

"In the interview which Gregory gave to the Italian periodical he says that at the age of 14 he left Catholicism so as to become a member of the Methodist Church in Bologna.

"He became a Protestant after having converted his parents, and then a little later he returned to the Papists.

"In 1933 he joined the monastic order of Galucco and then became a Benedictine monk in Valombrosa in Florence. In 1940 he became a 'priest' of the Papists and in 1944 joined the Fascists. He met Mussolini and became one of his closest co-workers. A terrible impression was created by Gregory's confession that he worships Mussolini as God and that Mussolini is now his spiritual leader!!

"After the death of Mussolini Gregory joined the Russian Church and on September 22, 1984, was 'ordained' 'Bishop' of Aquileia by Gabriel."(*Orthodoxos Khristianikos Agon,* No. 3, November, 1985, p. 4 (G)).

The Cyprianite Bishop Ambrose of Methone (personal communication) has defended Bishop Gregory, saying that he never "worshipped Mussolini as God", but was devoted to the memory of the Duce.

[211] *Orthodoxos Khristianikos Agon (Orthodox Christian Struggle)*, № 3, November, 1985, p. 3; February, 1987, p. 8. It appears that the "Tome of autonomy" was signed by Auxentius alone, who wrote: "I, Auxentius, by God's grace Archbishop of Athens and all Greece, acting within the boundaries of our territory of Western Europe (which I created on June 7, 1978) have decided to give permission to the

In 1987 this newly "autonomous" Church split up, with the Metropolitan Eulogius of Milan being received into the Polish Orthodox Church.[212]

In 1990 Metropolitan Gabriel followed, claiming that he had not known that Auxentius confessed that the new calendarists had no grace, which, he said, was a "heretical opinion". He took with him two bishops, 60 parishes and about 80,000 laity. Soon this Portuguese church was practising a particularly strange form of ecumenism.[213]

After Gabriel's death, Bishop Joao was elected metropolitan and confirmed by the Polish Synod. Subsequently, the Polish Church, alarmed by the eccentric practices of the Portuguese diocese, excised it from their communion.[214]

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Metropolis of Portugal, Spain and Western Europe to govern itself, having as their principal headquarters the God-protected metropolitan city of Lisbon… This metropolis will be under the direction of the GOC of Greece… P.S. The above Metropolitan with his vicar bishops is obliged to present himself to the Hierarchical Synod each October."

[212] Eulogius is considered to be a Freemason by Stavros Markou ([paradosis] Milan Freemasons", orthodox-tradition@yahoogroups.com, 05/09/01; http://www.geocities.com/Paris/8919/html/ortho/parasyn.htm.) However, Bishop Ambrose of Methone writes that he always denied this (personal communication, November 10, 2005).

[213] Ivan Moody ("Scandal for Orthodoxy in Portugal", ORTHODOX@LISTSERV.INDIANA.EDU (Orthodox Christianity) (01.02.2000)) tells us to what depths this new Portuguese Church has fallen: "Tomorrow, Wednesday 2nd January 2000, there will be inaugurated a new basilica in Torres Novas, north of Lisbon. In attendance will be, according the information we have received, bishops from the Churches of Russia, Romania, Bulgaria, Poland and from OCA…. The true leader of this sect is a lady known as "A Santa da Ladeira", who was excommunicated from the Roman Catholic Church many years ago and subjected in the early 1970s to psychological examination which found her to be profoundly schizophrenic. Charges of fraud were also to be brought against her but this did not happen with the chaos of the 1974 Revolution. She was subsequently adopted by Joao Gabriel and later elevated to be an "abbess", though she is married, with results that may be seen in a series of photographs I have in my possession and which have been forwarded to various competent authorities. They show: 1. This lady seated on a special throne in the church; 2. An "Orthodox" bishop holding up a RC host in a monstrance, this being adored by the "Santa" and the other clergy; 3. The "Santa", in the regalia of an abbess, with her husband and an "Orthodox" bishop in the church; 4. An earlier photograph showing her as the "reincarnation" of the Mother of God; 5. The "Santa" kissing a RC host, behind which appears a strange stain on the photograph, apparently not present on the film, which is claimed to be the bread of the Orthodox Eucharist and therefore to represent the union of the Roman and Orthodox Churches, of which the new basilica is symbolic; 6. Earlier photographs of her with stigmata - this was the time at which she was held for fraud and psychological examination. On the front of the basilica is an engraved colour picture of the "Santa" and her husband. There can be no doubt as to the link between these "Orthodox" and this offensive phenomenon. All this will be widely covered in the newspapers and on the television. Whatever political or other factors have prevented the hierarchies of the various churches from realizing the gravity of this situation, it seems to us, the Greek Orthodox here, that we have been abandoned. My priest, having spent the whole of yesterday telephoning to the Embassies of the various countries, is exhausted and depressed. Is this, he is asking, the Orthodoxy I have spent my life here trying to protect and promote?"

[214] Bishop Ambrose of Methone (personal communication, November 10, 2005).

In 1993 the "Synod of Milan" joined the "Patriarchate of Kiev" led by the KGB agent Philaret Denisenko, and was given yet another "Tome of Autonomy" by them…[215]

[215] See *Kirix Gnision Orthodoxon (Herald of the True Orthodox)*, 42, № 236, September, 1997, p. 228.

## *THE UNION OF 1985 AND THE TSAKOS AFFAIR*

By this time the Church was disintegrating so fast that the Auxentiite and Gerontian Synods (which now included most of the defunct Callistite Synod) decided to cast aside their differences and unite. And so on January 4/17, 1985, they came together and agreed: (1) to recognise the ordinations of 1979 on both sides, (2) to remove the penalties they had placed on each other, and (3) remove the accusations they had cast against each other. The reunited Synod of 17 bishops comprised: Archbishop Auxentius and Metropolitans Gerontius of Piraeus, Callinicus of Phthiotis, Anthony of Megara, Maximus of Demetrias, Callinicus of Corinth, Matthew of Oinoe, Germanus of Aitolia, Calliopius of Pentapolis, Callinicus of the Dodecanese, Euthymius of Thessalonica, Athanasius of Larissa, Stephen of Chios, Maximus of Cephalonia, Athanasius of Acharnae, Gerasimus of Thebes and Justin of Euripus.[216]

It should be noted that the original "rebels" against the Auxentiite Synod, Metropolitans Acacius, Chrysostom, Gabriel and Peter, still refrained from joining this union, fearing that it simply covered up crimes, and would soon disintegrate. They were soon to be proved right…

More surprising, even Bishop Macarius criticises the union, saying: "Immeasurable grief takes hold of my heart". Why? Because the recognition of the ordinations on both sides meant that the small group of formerly Callistite bishops whom he blames for subsequent events – especially Callinicus of Achaia and Calliopius of Pentapolis – and who had not, unlike the other penitent Callistite bishops, received cheirothesia from Auxentius, were not forced to repent of having been schismatics and receive cheirothesia.

But Bishop Macarius fails to see that if, as he believes, Auxentius was essentially blameless and all those who broke communion from him thereby became schismatics, then the group of Gerontian bishops to which he belonged (and belongs) – Callinicus of Phthiotis and Euthymius of Thessalonica – *also became schismatics* when they broke away from Auxentius in 1983, *and should also have received cheirothesia*. In fact, it could be argued that insofar as the Gerontians broke away from Auxentius over the question of who controlled certain church buildings – in other words, over "filthy lucre" (I Peter 5.2), their motivation was worse than that of the Callistites, and they deserved a more severe penalty. So, as the English proverb goes: "Those who live in glass houses should not throw stones…"

In the opinion of the present writer, however, *all* sides - Callistites, Auxentiites and Gerontians – were guilty in different ways and to different degrees, and so union between them was possible without hypocrisy only on the basis of mutual forgiveness of sins, recognition of orders and removal of all bans. Or if, as Bishop

[216] "Enkyklios" (Encyclical), *Ekklesiastiki Paradosis (Ecclesiastical Tradition),* January-February, 1985, № 20, pp. 262-263.

Macarius asserts, this was impossible on canonical grounds, then the only solution was for all 17 bishops to retire…

In any case, the union collapsed when it emerged that Auxentius had secretly ordained Dorotheus Tsakos, a former new calendarist priest who had been defrocked by the new calendarists in 1968 for homosexuality. Tsakos had then twice been ordained "metropolitan" by Old Calendarist episcopi vagantes. In July, 1985 he began to show priests an ordination certificate purporting to prove that he had been ordained "Metropolitan of Sparta and all the Peloponnese". The priests were troubled to see that the signatures of Archbishop Auxentius and Metropolitan Gerasimus of Thebes were on this document. Tsakos claimed that he had been ordained by Metropolitans Gerasimus of Thebes and Maximus of Cephalonia on the orders of Archbishop Auxentius; but he refused to reveal (by covering the relevant part of the ordination certificate with his hand) on what date the ordination had taken place.

On July 6/19, 1985, the Holy Synod met to discuss the matter. The three metropolitans involved denied that the ordination had taken place. Auxentius admitted that his signature might be genuine because he did sometimes sign blank ordination certificates to be filled in later (a revealing confession in itself!). But he denied – and always continued to deny – that he knew anything at all about the ordination of Tsakos. However, immediately after this meeting of the Synod, Gerasimus of Thebes confessed that the ordination had taken place as Tsakos had stated, and signed a written affidavit to that effect in the presence of eight other bishops.

Fr. Basil of Holy Transfiguration Monastery, Boston, tried to minimise the significance of this confession by pointing out that Gerasimus twice confessed that he had participated in the ordination and twice denied it. (In his last deposition before a Greek court of justice, in January, 1986, he confirmed under oath that the ordination had taken place on July 5, 1985.) Moreover, Gerasimus and the other witnesses were inconsistent in the date they ascribe to the event. Therefore, wrote Fr. Basil, "what is the value of such depositions, made by false witnesses who contradict and refute themselves?… Which one of all these written depositions says the truth? When did the ordination take place? In 1983? In 1984? In 1985? We admit that we see no possibility of finding any clue. In any case, it seems that the investigative committee 'probably' had the same difficulty."[217] "What is the validity of such depositions, made by witnesses who contradict and refute themselves?"[218]

However, is it not usual for a criminal caught red-handed in a criminal act to lie and then to change his testimony when his lie is exposed? In any case, why should Gerasimus have admitted to the crime even once if he was innocent? Moreover,

[217] "Excerpts from a Response by Fr. Basil of Holy Transfiguration Monastery to a Bishop of the Kiousis group, Kallinikos of the Dodecanese, concerning the 'ordination' of Dorotheos Tsakos" (MS), pp. 1, 2.
[218] *The Struggle against Ecumenism,* op. cit., p. 121, footnote.

there were other eyewitness testimonies confirming Gerasimus' guilt. One of these was the Reader Pericles Tsakiris, whom the translator of Fr. Basil's letter rather furtively and obliquely sought to blacken in a footnote.

As a result of their inquiries the committee came to the following conclusions, which any unprejudiced observer must agree with: (a) the ordination of Dorotheus Tsakos did take place, at the hands of Metropolitans Maximus and Gerasimus, and on the orders of Archbishop Auxentius; (b) the date was probably after Pascha, 1985 (which conclusion was confirmed by Gerasimus' last written deposition); and (c) the participants in the event, having been sworn to secrecy by Auxentius, lied to the Holy Synod and for fairly obvious reasons tried to obscure the date of the event.

Fr. Basil went on to claim that before the investigative committee could complete its work, the seventeen bishops who eventually defrocked Auxentius had created a schism. Therefore, he said, even if the ordination did take place, it is not Auxentius but his accusers who are the guilty ones!

This was *the exact opposite of the truth!* The fact of the matter was that in September, while the investigating committee was still carrying out its work and interrogating witnesses (as far as they could, for Auxentius and Maximus refused to cooperate in any way), a group of Auxentiite bishops decided to declare the affair of Dorotheus Tsakos "closed", regarding "every attempt to revive it as anticanonical and an attack on the Church". They also declared that the invitation to the metropolitans to give evidence to the investigating committee the next day was "anticanonical", "parasynagogical" and "counter to the will of the Holy Synod" - although the Holy Synod had appointed the investigating committee only two months before!

It is interesting to note which bishops signed this astonishing attempt to silence the work of the investigating committee: the oath-breaking and Mussolini-loving Portuguese and Italians Gabriel, James, Eulogius, Theodore and Gregory, *who were not even members of the Holy Synod*; Auxentius, Athanasius, Maximus and Germanus, *who had participated in the uncanonical ordinations of the Portuguese and Italians and* (in the cases of Auxentius and Maximus) *Tsakos;* and the Americans Paisius and Vincent, who had been closely associated with Auxentius in the early 1980s (for example, in the Auxentiite union with the Free Serbs in 1982) and later joined the new calendarists. In other words, these bishops who were now trying to stop the work of the investigating committee were in essence the same group of bishops who had been associates of Auxentius before the union of January, 1985, and had caused such damage to the Church before that date.

In spite of this provocation, the investigating bishops patiently continued their work. They invited Auxentius to appear before the Synod three times, but he refused. Then Auxentius, anticipating the announcement of his deposition, formed an "anti-Synod" and called on the president of the Synodical Court, Metropolitan Gerontius, to appear before a five-member pseudo-Synod to answer a false charge of

having married two persons of the same sex in 1981! Gerontius convincingly refuted this charge (which has never, to our knowledge, been brought up again). Finally, on October 22, Auxentius, Maximus, Gerasimus, Athanasius and Germanus were deposed for "consecrating" Tsakos, for lying to the Synod and for creating a schism.[219]

Even Archbishop Macarius admitted that Auxentius's actions in this period were indefensible, but characteristically chose not to go into detail on a matter that clearly embarrassed him, writing that Auxentius and the bishops that still remained loyal to him "undertook a series of hurried and uncanonical defrockings of many of our hierarchs."[220]

He was reticent because one of the hierarchs defrocked by Auxentius was Macarius' fellow-worker, Metropolitan Euthymius of Thessalonica, whom Auxentius accused of initiating his trial and deposition in order to avoid investigation of moral charges against himself: "while an order was given that a judicial examination should be put into operation in order to elucidate the accusations against the moral situation of Metropolitan Euthymius Orphanos, they turned round and incompetently initiated an examination against us to see whether we had indeed proceeded to nominate and consecrate Archimandrite Dorotheus Tsakos as Metropolitan of Patras…" Auxentius defrocked Euthymius on October 31, 1985 (№ 2137/18) for "factionalism, conspiracy and rebellion". Also defrocked was his elder, Iakovos Papadelis, "on the basis of accusations of moral falls against him by Athonites".[221]

And yet in spite of this Archbishop Macarius vehemently rejected the validity of Auxentius' defrocking by – among others – his own party of Gerontius, Callinicus and Euthymius! And some years later, in 1997, his Synod (headed at that time by Callinicus of Phthiotis and now, in 2005, by Macarius himself) declared that "the altercations during the year 1985 between the blessedly reposed hierarchs Auxentius and Gerontius arose from the plots of third parties and… the verdicts of both are uncanonical and invalid… It is understood that we recognize and also bless all the priestly services and other sacred ecclesiastical actions of the aforementioned Archbishop and Metropolitans, except the ordinations which they performed after 1985 to the present, which we reserve the right to examine upon the petition of the ordinands."[222]

However, this made no sense. If, as Archbishop Macarius asserted time and time again, Auxentius was the last true archbishop of the True Orthodox Christians

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[219] *Ekklesiastiki Paradosis (Ecclesiastical Tradition)*, 20, January-February, 1985, pp. 261-263; "Eis tas Epalxeis!" (To the Ramparts!), *I Phoni tis Orthodoxias (The Voice of Orthodoxy)*, №№ 802-803, November-December, 1985, pp. 1-33; *Orthodoxos Khristianikos Agon (Orthodox Christian Struggle)*, November, 1985, p. 3, February, 1987, p. 8.

[220] Bishop Macarius, op. cit.

[221] *I Phoni tis Orthodoxias (The Voice of Orthodoxy)*, № 921, March-April, 2003, p. 15.

[222] Protocol № 73, decision of April 1/14, 1997, in *Orthodoxon Paterikon Salpisma* (Orthodox Patristic Trumpet Call), March-April, 1997).

(before himself), and he remained true throughout the stormy period 1979-1985, and his defrocking in 1985 was uncanonical, then he (Macarius) condemned himself and his own party on at least three counts: (1) for breaking with Auxentius over the issue of the legal corporation in 1983, (2) for unjustly defrocking Auxentius for the ordination of Tsakos, and (3) for remaining in communion with Euthymius after Auxentius defrocked him and his elder. But Macarius wishes to exonerate *both* Auxentius (although he admits that his actions in 1985 were wrong) *and* himself and his party – while laying all the blame on mysterious "plots of third parties".

Auxentius' defenders sought to demonstrate that Orthodox Christians are not allowed to break communion with their lawful ecclesiastical authority unless that authority has proclaimed heresy, and even if that authority has committed flagrant crimes. This is true – so long as the possibility of bringing the sinning archbishop to trial exists. But Fr. Basil appeared to reject the possibility that metropolitans can bring their archbishop to trial for any other charge than heresy. In this opinion he was mistaken. There have been many occasions in Church history when archbishops have been defrocked by their fellow bishops in accordance with the Holy Canons for transgressions other than heresy. If such were not the case, then as long as the archbishop did not proclaim heresy he could commit murder and adultery and remain first-hierarch of the Church – which is halfway to Papism…

## *A NEW FLORINITE ARCHBISHOP*

In November, 1985, Metropolitan Gerontius approached Metropolitan Chrysostom and invited him to the join the Synod that had been purged of Auxentius and his supporters. Chrysostom replied in a conciliatory manner, thanked Gerontius "for your recognition of the righteousness of our (four bishops') break of relations with the Synod", but insisted on the fulfilment of two conditions before he could join: "the removal of Bishop Euthymius from my diocese" and the seeking of the written opinion of theologians on the degree to which "economy" (condescension) could be employed with regard to the earlier canonical questions that had not yet been resolved. This was necessary "in view of the extremely detailed deadlock into which our Holy Struggle has come…"

The opinions of six theologians (three priests and three laymen) were duly sought. They said that the four bishops – Acacius, Chrysostom, Gabriel and Peter – could join the Synod led by Gerontius provided that the new president of the Synod should not be any bishop who had been involved in the Callistite coup or Auxentiite counter-coup of 1979. This was an eminently reasonable condition, since all of the participants in the coup and counter-coup of 1979, not to mention the Gerontian schism of 1983, had besmirched their reputations, and would not have had the authority to unite the Church for long. The new archbishop could only come from one of the four bishops – Acacius, Chrysostom, Gabriel and Peter - who had taken no part in these events, but who had pointed out the need for a cleansing of the Church from the tares sown by Auxentius. This need was now, belatedly, recognised by all.

Of these four bishops, Metropolitan Peter, as living in America and as having rejected the encyclical of 1974, was clearly not a candidate. And he joined the Synod first. Thereby, it must be admitted, he created another problem for the new archbishop, whoever he might be, in that he would have to see that Metropolitan Peter conformed to the 1974 encyclical…[223]

Finally, in January, 1986, Metropolitan Chrysostom joined, and was elected archbishop by ten votes to six. It will be remembered that Chrysostom had been elected as second candidate for the episcopate (after Acacius Pappas) as far back as the pan-clerical congress in April, 1957.[224] So there was a certain historical justice in his being elected archbishop now, some thirty years later.

However, Bishop Macarius writes: "My conscience forces me to condemn the election of Chrysostom as archbishop as totally uncanonical because, first and foremost, it was made as a result of the uncanonical defrocking of the canonical Archbishop Auxentius, whose throne Chrysostom seized while the archbishop still alive, making him an adulterous free-rider…"

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[223] In the spring of 1985, in his monastery in Paiania, Metropolitan Acacius told the present writer that he was deeply unhappy that Metropolitan Peter gave communion to new calendarists in his Astoria diocese.

[224] *Khristianiki Poreia (The Christian Way)*, March, 1992, p. 8.

Macarius here fails to mention the rather important fact that Chrysostom took no part in the defrocking of Auxentius. That was done by Gerontius and his faction – that is, Bishop Macarius' own faction! As for "seizing" the throne, what kind of "seizure" are we talking about when Chrysostom in no way imposed himself, but was first invited by Gerontius to join the Synod, and was then elected in a perfectly canonical election?! So if Chrysostom was an "adulterous free-rider", the Gerontian bishops were those who prepared the bedchamber and even invited the lovers into it!

"Secondly," continues Bishop Macarius, "during the proceedings of the election, there were present two Metropolitans of Thessalonica, Chrysostom and Euthymius, and both of them voted as such, something that is totally contrary to the Holy Canons."[225]

This is a more just accusation. Nevertheless, it may well be asked: whose fault was it that there were two metropolitans of Thessalonica? Chrysostom had been made metropolitan of the city much earlier than Euthymius, and the Gerontians, as Chrysostom noted, had recognised the justice of his struggle against corruption in the Church. Clearly, therefore, if one of the two metropolitans was an adulterer bishop, it was Euthymius!

The issue was the more serious in that the flock in Thessalonica was divided, with one part refusing to accept Euthymius because of his reputation – throughout Greece - as a homosexual. It was agreed that the dissident parishes in Thessalonica should be allowed to commemorate Chrysostom for one year while they got used to the idea that they were now in communion with Euthymius. However, when the year was over, they had still not got used to it, and refused to commemorate Euthymius. Clearly, the only solution to the problem was a canonical ecclesiastical trial of Euthymius.…

Almost immediately the problem of the legal corporations raised its head again. 8 hierarchs – Gerontius of Piraeus, Callinicus of Phthiotis, Euthymius of Thessalonica, Stephen of Chios, Athanasius of Acharnae, Justin of Euripus, Paisius of America and Vincent of Aulona (the last two joined a little later) – belonged to the board of the corporation "General Fund of the Church of the True Orthodox Christians of Greece". 4 hierarchs – Anthony of Megara, Callinicus of Achaia, Matthew of Oinoe and Calliopius of Pentapolis – belonged to the board of the corporation "Greek Church of the True Orthodox Christians". The remaining 4 hierarchs – Archbishop Chrysostom, Peter of Astoria, Maximus of Magnesia and Callinicus of the Twelve Islands – did not belong to any board. Overtures towards a union of the two corporations were made by the board of the "Greek Church of the True Orthodox Christians" to the board of the "General Fund". But these overtures were rejected.

[225] Bishop Macarius, op. cit.

The outlines of the schism of 1995 can already be discerned in these figures. Clearly, the faction headed by Gerontius, and including the notorious Euthymius, could control the Synod if it wanted, for it had half the votes in the Synod and control of many more churches than the others through the "General Fund". Much would depend on how Metropolitan Gerontius used his power. And much would depend on how the other members of his faction would act when he died and they ceased to have the majority in the Synod. Metropolitan Gerontius died in 1994, on the eve of the schism…

## *THE ECCLESIOLOGY OF METROPOLITAN CYPRIAN*

In 1984 Metropolitan Cyprian, the last heir of the Callistite coup d'état, and the only one who did not repent of it, formed a new "Synod of Resistors" with Metropolitan Giovanni (Bascio) of Sardinia, a former Capuchin monk who, after being in the MP and the Nestorian heresy, had been baptized and ordained by the Callistites in 1982.[226]

Cyprian's position was based on a new ecclesiology which is worth examining in some detail. Stavros Markou writes: "While still a member of the 'Callistite' Synod, Bishop Cyprian was castigated by a new calendar periodical, because, though he claimed to be an old calendarist bishop, 'he accepted hundreds of new calendarists at his monastery and churches', and because 'he has joint prayers with them', 'gives them the mysteries and divine Communion', and 'allows them to come to confession to him to receive the immaculate mysteries in new calendar churches'. When Bishop Cyprian was charged again for not giving a sufficient reply to these accusations, and in addition, when the title of 'Ecumenist' was bestowed on him, his reply was that these charges are 'purely personal attacks'…

"Bishop Cyprian justified his separation from the other Callistite hierarchs in 1984 by asserting that it was a matter of faith; that is, he taught that the new calendar State Church, though ailing, had not yet been condemned by a Church Council, and therefore still had full canonical status. He rested his argument on the 1937 private letter of Metropolitan Chrysostom while ignoring both the Encyclical of 1935, which had been issued by the entire hierarchy of the True Orthodox Christians, and Metropolitan Chrysostom's later Encyclical of 1950, not to mention the encyclical of 1974, issued by Archbishop Auxentius's Synod (to which authority the then Archimandrite Cyprian was subject). Bishop Cyprian has maintained that Metropolitan Cyprian's 1950 encyclical was not a true expression of his confession, but made under duress and with the hope that it would appease the Matthewite bishops. Here, however, it should be noted that the Encyclical of 1950 expressed not merely the view of Metropolitan Chrysostom, but of the entire [Florinite] Synod…

"Furthermore, in making this claim concerning Metropolitan Chrysostom's Encyclical of 1950, Bishop Cyprian ignores certain other elements. Metropolitan Chrysostom of Florina had spoken his convictions in clear conscience and had maintained them with integrity. Nothing less could be expected from a man of his stature. Since he was a man of such stature, it is not entirely honest to dismiss so lightly the formal synodical and official Encyclical of 1950 in which Metropolitan

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[226] It is sometimes asserted that the Italian parishes under Giovanni voluntarily left the Moscow Patriarchate and joined the Nestorians before returning to the Old Calendarists. In 1975 the present writer heard a different story from the Italians' bishop when they were in the MP, Metropolitan Anthony (Bloom) of Sourozh, who said that he had been forced to expel the Italians following a phone call from Metropolitan Juvenal of Tula. Juvenal said that the MP was having negotiations with the Vatican over the uniate question in the Ukraine, and the Pope had laid it down as a condition for the success of the negotiations that there should be no MP parishes in Italy. So the Italians were *expelled.*

Chrysostom repudiated and disavowed everything [sic!] said and written by him previously. In this encyclical, he affirmed that the new calendarists must be received by chrismation and that their mysteries are invalid…

"Bishop Cyprian also ignores the earlier encyclical of 1935. In addition, Metropolitan Callistus, one of the bishops who illegally consecrated Archimandrite Cyprian as a bishop, had always expressed the same view taken by the Matthewite bishops (i.e., that sacramental grace had departed from the State Church the instant it had changed the calendar in 1924).

"In connection with this, in his publication *Agios Kyprianos* (July, 1983, p. 210), Bishop Cyprian complained that Metropolitan Callistus, who consecrated him to the episcopate, 'proceeded to publish and circulate a booklet entitled *Apologia* and an open letter entitled *Epistle of Confession*… without previous consultation with the other members of our Sacred Synod.' Concerning these two publications of Metropolitan Callistus, Bishop Cyprian wrote that the views expressed therein are 'without witness, unproven, anti-patristic and hence un-Orthodox'.

"Yet Metropolitan Callistus's confession of faith was known to all, both young and old, and it never changed throughout the years. Neither was it a 'personal' matter, as Bishop Cyprian might have said, but rather was proclaimed publicly by Metropolitan Callistus, both in writing and from the ambo: there was – he said openly and consistently – no sanctifying grace in the new calendar State Church…"[227]

Bishop Cyprian's ecclesiology was expounded in his book, *Ecclesiological Theses.* "The Orthodox Church as a whole is unerring and invincible," he writes. "It is possible, however, for Christians and for local Churches to fall in faith; that is to say, it is possible for them to suffer spiritually and for one to see a certain 'siege of illness within the body of the Church', as St. John Chrysostom says. It is possible for Christians to separate and for 'divisions' to appear within the Church, as the Apostle Paul writes to the Corinthians. It is possible for local Churches into fall into heresy, as occurred in the ancient Orthodox Church of the West, which fell into the heresies of Papism and Protestantism and finally into the panheresy of ecumenism.

"Spiritual maladies within the Church are cured either by repentance or by judgement. Until the judgement or expulsion of a heretic, schismatic, or sinner – either by the Church or, in a more direct manner, by the Lord -, the opinion of a believer cannot be a substitute for the sentence of the Church and of her Lord, Jesus Christ, even if the resolution of a situation be prolonged until the Second Coming. As is well known, in the Scriptures, the Church is likened to a field replete with 'wheat' and 'tares', in accordance with Divine and ecclesiastical economy. Sinners and those who err in correctly understanding the Faith, yet who have not been sentenced by ecclesiastical action, are simply considered ailing members of the Church. The Mysteries [sacraments] of these unsentenced members are valid as

[227] Markou, in http://iasidnev.livejournal.com/145089.html.

such, according to the Seventh Ecumenical Council, as, for example, the President of the Synod, St. Tarasios, remarks: '[their] Ordination' 'is from God'. By contrast, should expositors of heresy punish the Orthodox opposed to them, these punishments are ecclesiastically invalid and groundless 'from the time their preaching began' (i.e., from the moment they began preaching heresy), as St. Celestine of Rome wrote and as the Third Ecumenical Synod agreed."[228]

When a bishop preaches heresy "publicly" "and bareheaded in the Church", continues the metropolitan, the Orthodox Christians should immediately separate themselves from him, in accordance with the 31st Apostolic Canon and the 15th Canon of the First-and-Second Synod of Constantinople. Such action by the Orthodox does not introduce schism, but rather serves to protect the Church from schisms and divisions. "He who preaches heresy or he who brings innovation into the Church divides her and abrogates her oneness or unity. He who opposes the preaching of heresy, or who separates himself from it, is eager to save the oneness or unity of the Church. The aim of opposition and separation is the combatting of heresy, the defense of the Orthodox Faith, and the preservation of the unity of the Orthodox Church, indeed of Orthodoxy itself."[229]

So far so good. However, at this point, as he turns to apply these principles to the heresy of ecumenism and its forerunner, the innovation of the new calendar, the metropolitan makes some distinctly controversial statements. "With regard to the innovation in the festal calendar, Orthodox are divided into two parts: into those who are ailing in Faith and those who are healthy, into innovators and opposers – into followers of innovation, whether in knowledge or in ignorance, and those opposed to it, who have separated themselves from heresy, in favor of Orthodoxy. The latter are strugglers for oneness among the 'divided', as the Seventh Ecumenical Synod calls those who so separated for the Orthodox unity of the Church. The followers of the festal calendar innovation have not yet been specifically judged in a Pan-Orthodox fashion, as provided for by the Orthodox Church. As St. Nikodemos of the Holy Mountain writes, the violator of established precepts is considered sentenced, insofar as he is judged by 'the second entity (which is the council or synod).' Since 1924, the innovators have been awaiting judgement and shall be judged on the basis of the decisions of the holy Synods, both Oecumenical and local, and, to be sure, on the basis of the ecclesiastical pronouncements of the sixteenth century against what were then Papal proposals for changes in the festal calendar. In this respect, those who have walled themselves off from the innovators have actually broken communion 'before [a] conciliar or synodal verdict,' as is allowed in the Fifteenth Canon of the First-and-Second Synod. That is to say, the innovators are still unsentenced. Consequently, their Mysteries are valid…"[230]

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[228] Metropolitan Cyprian, "Ai Ekklesiologikai Theseis Mas" (Our Ecclesiological Theses), *Agios Kyprianos (St. Cyprian)*, November, 1984, 191. Quotations from the translation in Patrick G. Barker, *A Study of the Ecclesiology of Resistance*, Etna, Ca.: Center for Traditionalist Orthodox Studies, 1994, pp. 57-58.

[229] Barker, op. cit., p. 59.

[230] Barker, op. cit., pp. 60-61.

"Every innovationist member of the divided Greek Church is capable of changing over to opposition against the Ecumenist innovation. This can be accomplished through repentance… A return to Orthodoxy can also take place through a formal renunciation of heresy… Therefore, the Orthodox Tradition of the Holy Oecumenical Synods and of the Holy Fathers of the Orthodox Church prescribes that that part of the divided Greek Church that is ailing in Faith be received by one of the foregoing means of repentance and returned to the ranks of Orthodoxy. For they are not condemned schismatic or heretical Christians, but members of the Church who have not yet been brought to trial."[231]

To suppose that the innovators "are still unsentenced" is a mistake. In May, 1935, all the truly Orthodox (i.e. Old Calendar) Metropolitans of the Church of Greece came together and synodically condemned the new calendarists as schismatics without the grace of sacraments. Concerning the implications of this declaration with regard to the question of grace, the metropolitans made themselves crystal clear in an encyclical issued on June 8/21, 1935: "We recommend to all those who follow the Orthodox Calendar that they have no spiritual communion with the schismatic church of the schismatic ministers, from whom the grace of the All-Holy Spirit has fled, because they have violated the decisions of the Fathers of the Seventh Ecumenical Council and the Pan-Orthodox Councils which condemned the Gregorian calendar. That the schismatic Church does not have Grace and the Holy Spirit is affirmed by St. Basil the Great, who says the following: 'Even if the schismatics have erred about things which are not Dogmas, since the head of the Church is Christ, according to the divine Apostle, from Whom all the members live and receive spiritual increase, they have torn themselves away from the harmony of the members of the Body and no longer are members [of that Body] or have the grace of the Holy Spirit. Therefore he who does not have it cannot transfer it to others.'"[232]

Now some have argued that this conciliar decision was later rejected by the leader of the Greek Old Calendarists, Metropolitan Chrysostom of Florina, and that it therefore represents only an "extremist", "Matthewite" position. However, the doctrine that schismatics have no grace is not a specifically "Matthewite" position, but is based on many canons and patristic sayings, notably the First Canonical Epistle of St. Basil the Great. In fact, as Bishop Ephraim of Boston points out, the new calendarists and the Moscow Patriarchate have adopted a distinctly "Matthewite" position in relation to the True Orthodox, declaring that they have no grace of sacraments – while at the same time declaring that the Western heretics do have grace![233] In any case, it is not true that Metropolitan Chrysostom renounced the Council of 1935. From 1937 to 1950 he appeared to doubt it, introducing the notion (unknown in patristic literature, as Bishop Ephraim again correctly points out), of "potential schism". But in 1950 he repented of these doubts and openly and

[231] Barker, op. cit., pp. 61, 62.
[232] Calliopius, op. cit., pp. 277-278.
[233] Letter of Reader Polychronios, April 29 / May 12, 1987.

unambiguously returned to the confession of 1935. Some have said that in private correspondence he claimed to have been pushed into making this confession by "extremists", that he made it for the sake of unity and that it did not represent his true thinking. It seems extremely unlikely that such a great confessor could have dissembled in his confession of faith. But in any case, even if he had private doubts, it is his public confession that we must judge him by – and that, from 1950 to the end of his life, was thoroughly Orthodox.

Now Metropolitan Cyprian does not mention the Council of 1935. Nor does he mention Metropolitan Chrysostom's encyclical of 1950, nor the Old Calendarist Council under the presidency of Archbishop Auxentius in 1974 (when Metropolitan Cyprian himself was under his omophorion), which explicitly declared that the new calendarist ecumenists had no grace of sacraments. The reason for these omissions cannot be that he does not know of their existence. The reason can only be – although he does not write this explicitly – that he rejects their validity, or at any rate the validity of their decisions in relation to the ecumenists. To understand why he does this, let us now turn to his theory of the Councils and their relationship to heretics.

Of central importance in Metropolitan Cyprian's argument is his concept of the "Unifying Synod", that is, a Synod that unites the heretics to Orthodoxy, such as the Seventh Ecumenical Council. By implication – although, again, he does not state this explicitly here – a Synod that simply condemns the heretics without uniting them to Orthodoxy (such as the decisions of the Greek Old Calendarist Councils of 1935 and 1974 against the new calendarists, or the 1983 anathema of the Russian Church Abroad against Ecumenism) is of less significance and is not in fact competent to expel heretics from the Church. Indeed, it is difficult to see, according to Metropolitan Cyprian's theory, how or when any heretic has been expelled from the Church. For if, before the convening of a Unifying Synod, the heretics are not outside the Church but simply an ailing faction *within* the Church, and if a Unifying Synod does not expel heretics from the Church but simply unites the ailing and the healthy parts of the same Church in a closer union, there seems to be no mechanism for the expulsion of heretics *from* the Church altogether – in other words, there are no *Separating* or *Expelling* Synods. It would not be inconsistent with his theory to suppose that those heretics who refuse to be unified by the Unifying Synod are thereby expelled from the Church altogether; but this is not stated explicitly (at any rate, in the position paper under review), so heavy is the emphasis on the supposed fact that these Synods unified rather than expelled the heretics.

Metropolitan Cyprian develops his concept of a "Unifying Council" as follows: "During the reign of the iconoclastic innovation, for example, it was impossible for an Orthodox Synod of the entire Church to be convened. For this reason, such a Synod was convened when the iconoclastic heresy was no longer in power, that is, in 787, as the Seventh Oecumenical Synod of union. The same Seventh Oecumenical Synod writes through its Fathers that the Synod took place 'so that we might change the discord of controversy into concord, that the dividing wall of enmity might be

removed and that the original rulings of the Catholic [Orthodox] Church might be validated.' That is, it was convened so that the differing factions of the Church, divided up to the time of the Synod – the Iconoclasts disagreeing with the Orthodox belief and the Orthodox opposed to the iconoclastic heresy -, might be united by means of an agreement within Orthodoxy."

This is inaccurate both as regards the Ecumenical Councils in general and as regards the Seventh Council in particular. First, there were some Ecumenical Councils that took place without the participation of heretics – the Second and the Fifth. According to the reasoning of Metropolitan Cyprian, these must be considered not to be "Unifying" and therefore lacking in full validity! And yet there is no "more valid" Council in Orthodox history than the Seven Ecumenical Councils. Moreover, after several of the Ecumenical Councils many of the heretics were not only not "united", but remained in bitter enmity to the Orthodox Church. Thus there were many Arians after the First Council, many Nestorians after the Third and many Monophysites after the Fourth – in fact, all three heresies are very numerous to the present day. Even the Seventh Council was only temporarily "unifying", since the iconoclastic heresy broke out again some years later. Thus according to the reasoning of Metropolitan Cyprian, we must eliminate the First, Third and Fourth Ecumenical Councils from the category of "Unifying Council".

Secondly, even those Councils which took place with the participation of heretics did not receive them until they had renounced their heresies. They made it quite clear that the heretics were *outside* the Church until such a renunciation. However, if, as Metropolitan Cyprian asserts, heretics cannot be considered to be outside the Church until they have been condemned at a "Unifying Council" in which they themselves participated, then not only were the Arians, Nestorians, Monophysites and others still "members of the Church weak in faith" until the Unifying Councils that condemned them, but, as Hieromonk (now Bishop) Nectarius (Yashunsky) pointed out, "we shall have to recognize the Roman Catholics and Protestants as 'as yet uncondemned members of the Church', because since the time of their separation there has not been (and until 'their union in Orthodoxy' there cannot be) a Council of the united (undivided Universal Church) in common with them!"[234]

"As far as the Seventh Council is concerned," continues Hieromonk Nectarius, "not only did it not consider the iconoclasts to be a part of the Church, but they themselves did not pretend to be such." In support of this statement, Fr. Nectarius quotes from the Acts of the Seventh Ecumenical Council. "These are the words of the uniting iconoclasts. Thus Basil, bishop of Ancyra, said: 'As far as I was able, I investigated the question of the icons and converted to the Holy Catholic Church with complete conviction.' Theodore, bishop of Myra, said: '... I beseech God and your holiness to unite me, the sinful one, to the Holy Catholic Church.' (pp. 41, 43 in the edition of the Kazan Theological Academy). "

[234] Hieromonk Nectarius Yashunsky, *Ekklesiologicheskie Antitezisy (Ecclesiological Antitheses)* (MS).

And here are the witnesses of the holy Fathers of the Council: "His Holiness Patriarch Tarasius said: 'What is now to be our relationship to this heresy that has again arisen in our time?' John, the most beloved of God, locum tenens of the apostolic throne in the east, said: 'Heresy divides every man from the Church.' The Holy Council said: 'That is evident.' The Holy Council said: 'Let the bishops who are standing before us read their renunciations, insofar *as they are now converting to the Catholic Church.*'" (p. 48).

Thirdly, the exceptional importance of Ecumenical or "Unifying" Councils should not lead us to cast doubt on *local* Councils' authority to expel heretics from the Church. Many of the heretics of the early centuries were first cast out of the Church by local Councils. For example, Arius was cast out by a local Council presided over by St. Alexander, Bishop of Alexandria, in 321 and again in 323 (the First Ecumenical Council did not take place until 325). Again, local Councils convened at Rome condemned the Nestorians (under Pope St. Celestine), the Monothelites (under Pope St. Martin) and the Iconoclasts (under Pope Gregory III) – in each case *before* the convening of the Third, Sixth and Seventh Ecumenical Councils, which never disputed the validity of these local Councils, but rather *confirmed their decisions*.

Thus when the heretical bishop Theodosius in conversation with St. Maximus the Confessor disputed the validity of the local Council under St. Martin that condemned the Monothelites on the grounds that it was not convened by an emperor, St. Maximus replied that the validity of a Council depended on its recognising "the true and immutable dogmas", not on who convened it or how general it was. Again, when the same saint was asked in the Emperor's palace why he was not in communion with the Throne of Constantinople, he replied: "… They have been deposed and deprived of the priesthood at the local council which took place recently in Rome. What Mysteries, then, can they perform? Or what spirit will descend upon those who are ordained by them?"[235]

Again, Bishop Theophan the Recluse points out that before the beginning of the Seventh Ecumenical Council, its president-to-be, St. Tarasius, bewailed the fact that "we (the iconoclastic Church of Constantinople) are being anathematised by them (the other Local Churches in Local Councils) every day".[236]

If local Councils did not have the authority to expel heretics from the Church, we should have to condemn many local Councils for exceeding their competency and assuming an authority that did not belong to them. These would include many of the Councils of the Early Church, which expelled such heretics as Marcion and Sabellius; the local Councils of the Great Church of Constantinople between the eleventh and fourteenth centuries that expelled the Roman Catholics; and the Councils of the Russian Church presided over by Patriarch Tikhon that

[235] Fr. Christopher Birchall, *The Life of our Holy Father Maximus the Confessor*, Boston: Holy Transfiguration Monastery, 1982, p. 38.
[236] Bishop Theophan, "Chto takoe 'anafema'?" (What is 'anathema'?) quoted by Vladislav Dmitriev, *Neopravdannoe Edinstvo (Unjustified Unity)* (MS, 1996, p. 19).

anathematized the communists and their co-workers in 1918 and the renovationist heretics in 1923. However, the Church, which has the mind of Christ, has accepted all of these acts as lawful and valid. To think otherwise is to suppose that for the last several hundred years the Church has – God forbid! - lost her God-given power to bind and to loose since the convening of the last Ecumenical or Pan-Orthodox Council! [237]

The danger to which the false Cyprianite ecclesiology exposes its followers can be seen from the behaviour of one of Cyprian's bishops, Chrysostomos (Gonzales) of Etna, California. On July 18, 1986 he wrote an open letter to the new calendar Archbishop James (Koukouzis) in which he said that his synod had cut itself off from the rest of the Old Calendar Church because it believed that the new calendar church was the mother church. "We never denied the existence of the Grace in our Mother Church" – that is, the new calendar church. And then he went on to say: "We are not another
Church over and above the Mother Church". He congratulated James on "his many accomplishments" and hoped that there would one day figure among his "many accomplishments" "the bringing of your Orthodox brethren (Old Calendarists) together with you" (where?). And he ended his open letter by saying: "I the youngest and least among the traditionalist bishops in this country, ask your forgiveness for any involuntary offense and humbly kiss your right hand."

Such open treachery against the Old Calendarist movement could not go unpunished, and on November 5/18, 1986, Archbishop Chrysostom's Synod proceeded to defrock Metropolitans Cyprian and "John of Sardinia, and those ordained by them, to wit: a) Chrysostomom Gonzales (Mexican) b) Niphon Gigoundou (Kenyan), c) Chrysostom Kouskoutsopoulos, d) Chrysostom Marlasis and three more, that is: one Swedish, one Italian and one Austrian of whom their identities are unknown to us, all of whom compose the innovative "Holy Synod of Resistance". The Cyprianites were deposed for creating a schism, for giving communion to new calendarists ("because he without discernment gives the Holy Mysteries of our Church to modernizing, schismatic and ecumenist new calendarists") and for preaching that the new calendarists have grace of sacraments ("because he has fallen from the Orthodox faith… and embraced ecumenist false beliefs, namely, that the schismatic new-calendarists make up the unaltered One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church., which is the treasury of saving grace").[238] The judgement was signed by Archbishop Chrysostomos and Metropolitans Gerontius, Callinicus (of Thaumakou), Anthony (of Attica and Megara), Maximus (of Demetrias and Magnesia), Callinicus (of

[237] For the Cyprianite position, see Patrick Barker, op. cit. For criticism of the Cyprianite ecclesiology, see Holy Transfiguration Monastery, *The Struggle against Ecumenism*, op. cit., pp. 112-120; V. Moss, "Can Heretics have the Grace of Sacraments?", *Tserkovnost' (Churchness)*, № 1, 2000; I.I. Voloshin, "Vozmozhen li 'Istinno-Pravoslavnij Ekumenizm'?" (Is 'True Orthodox Ecumenism' Possible?), *Vertograd-Inform*, №№ 7-8 (64-65), July-August, 2000, pp. 45-59.

[238] *I Phoni tis Orthodoxias (The Voice of Orthodoxy)*, № 811, January-February, 1987, pp. 22-32. See also *Orthodoxos Khristianikos Agon (Orthodox Christian Struggle)*, № 8, February, 1987, p. 7.

Achaia), Matthew (of Oinoe), Calliopius (of Pentapolis), Callinicus (of the Dodecanese), Euthymius (of Thessalonica), Stephanos (of Chios), Athanasius (of Acharnae) and Justin (of Euboea).

The judgement points out that in September, 1984, after Cyprian had prayed with the ecumenist Patriarch Nicholas he had been summoned to give an account of himself, but had not appeared. Then, on September 19, he had been banned from serving for 40 days, but had continued to serve. Finally, on April 5, 1985 Cyprian and Giovanni of Sardinia had formed their own Synod and separated from the GOC Synod.

However, Bishop Ambrose of Methone writes: "The accusation of 'praying with the ecumenist Patriarch Nicholas' is delightfully absurd. As I was present, I can witness what happened: One Sunday, when the Liturgy had already begun, the door of the altar opened and in tottered, totally unexpected, Patriarch Nicholas of Alexandria. He sat there until the end (he was by then almost blind) and in the sermon the Metropolitan mentioned his presence and expressed a prayer that God would enlighten him to condemn the ecumenist heresy – otherwise no-one outside would have known he was there. Afterwards he tottered off again. Should we have thrown the old man down the steps? When one reaches such a level of silliness, how can one take anything seriously? As to the 40 days' suspension, we knew nothing of such a decision until afterwards, when I was given a copy of the document in Kenya, of all places, by a priest of Paisios, the rev. David Palchikoff, who had been given it be Bishop Vikentios during his visit to Africa a few weeks before."[239]

The Cyprianites contested the decision on procedural grounds, in that they had not been given notification of the trial[240], and could not be judged by the Chrysostomites anyway since they had never formed part of their Synod. This latter defence was very weak: the "Florinite" bishops as a whole formed a single group, in spite of schisms. If Florinites could not judge Florinites, then who – the new calendarists?!

More serious was the criticism that if Cyprian was defrocked for giving communion to new calendarists, why not Peter of Astoria also, since he also gave communion to new calendarists, considering them to be Orthodox? The problem became especially acute when, in May, 1994, Archimandrite Paul Stratigeas, chancellor of the diocese of Astoria, admitted in an interview to the New York *National Herald*: "I provide the Mysteries to the followers of the new calendar." However, Archimandrite Paul sincerely repented, and later, as Metropolitan of

[239] Bishop Ambrose, personal communication, November 10, 2005.

[240] Bishop Ambrose writes: "You also mention the fact that Archbishop Chrysostomos' Synod apparently deposed our Metropolitan in 1986. As now, almost twenty years later, no such document has ever been communicated to us, we are still in the dark. All we have seen is a text printed in their periodical, but the four then members of their Synod whom we asked (Petros of Astoria, Gerontios of Piraeus, Antonios of Attika, and Euthymios of Thessaloniki) all said that no such text had ever been shown to them, nor had they signed it; they regarded the whole affair as an invention of the personal animosity of Kalliopios." (personal communication, August 12, 2005)

Astoria in succession to Peter, decreed that new calendarists who came to church seeking communion must first have confession, and then, during confession, be instructed that they must repent of the heresies of the new calendarists and receive Chrismation.

In 1997 Archpriest Lev Lebedev had a dispute with the Cyprianites on the question of grace. "This debate," he wrote, "concerned a very important matter. The Synod of the Resisters of Metropolitan Cyprian has officially declared that the ecumenist churches are also grace-filled and the sacraments there valid. I understood (in the debate) better and deeper *what* they wanted to say. And they to a large extent took in my criticism. Vladyka Cyprian referred in particular to the opinion to the opinion of our Hieromartyr Cyril of Kazan, and affirmed that the sacraments are valid, but are *to the condemnation* of the conscious ecumenists, but are saving for the simple, ignorant people. But I said that insofar as, in this way, the grace of God works *differently* in the ecumenist churches from in the Orthodox who reject heresy, the Synod of Resisters *must not and cannot* make *official* declarations, neither about the presence of grace nor about the lack of grace in these churches. It is sufficient that he on principle has no Eucharistic communion with them and reproaches ecumenism as a heresy. Otherwise, the result is a great temptation for the Orthodox (especially in Russia) and a whole series of theoretical theological misunderstandings. The debate is not over. But I am prepared to ascribe the mistake of the Synod of Cyprian to the realm of 'personal theological opinions', which does not destroy my unity with them, since on the whole Cyprian himself and all his bishops and monks are undoubtedly people who think and live in a very Orthodox way!"[241]

Metropolitans Cyprian and John "proceeded to consecrate new bishops to form their self-styled 'Synod of Those in Resistance'. Unfortunately, many of the newly-consecrated bishops for the Cyprianite Synod were of similar ill-repute as their consecrators. Among the first Cyprianite bishops to be consecrated were Chrysostom (Mariasis) of Christianoupolis, Ambrose (Baird) of Methone, Michael (Pirenta) of Nora, and Symeon (Minihofer) of Lampsacus. This latter bishop, among others, has a very interesting history. Born Helmut Clemens Kyrillus Symeon Minihofer-Windisch, he was ordained and consecrated by bishops of the so-called 'American Orthodox Catholic Church' – a Roman Catholic organization of Brazilian origin, in schism from the Vatican. In 1978, he was elected as 'Patriarch' Cyril of the 'American Orthodox Catholic Church', though he resided in Switzerland. 'Patriarch' Cyril resigned from his position in 1985, and was accepted into the 'Synod of Those in Resistance' under Bishop Cyprian, who installed him as Symeon, the titular bishop of Lampsacus.

"At some point during this time, a certain Bishop Eulogius of Milan (formerly of the 'Lisbonite' schism) was accepted into the 'Synod of Those in Resistance', in

[241] Lebedev, letter of June 16, 1997, in Protodeacon German Ivanov-Trinadtsaty, "Svetloj pamiati Otsa Protoierea L'va Lebedeva" (To the Radiant Memory of Protopriest Lev Lebedev), http://catacomb.org.ua/modules.php?name=Pages&go=print_page&pid=189, p. 8.

which he assisted Bishop Cyprian in performing more consecrations. Among the new bishops consecrated were Chrysostom (Gonzales) of Etna, Niphon (Kigundu) of Uganda, Auxentius (Chapman) of Photike, Photius (Siromachov) of Triaditsa, and Chrysostom (Alemangos) of Sydney. Unfortunately, all of these bishops have the same typical defects as their consecrators: they are either unacceptable on canonical grounds or confess an ecclesiology that is contrary to the teachings of the Orthodox Church."[242]

The Cyprianites continued to go their own way supported only by the Romanian and Bulgarian Old Calendarists and (from 1994 until the early 2000s) ROCOR. However, ROCOR's Bishop Gregory Grabbe criticised ROCOR's union with Cyprian, writing: "It is strange to hear from a bishop who affirms his Orthodoxy the thought that the Church can 'be divided'. The Holy Fathers taught that it always was, is and will be the one Bride of Christ." In general Bishop Gregory considered that Cyprian "and his episcopate confesses their own, and *by no means Orthodox* teaching on the possibility of the grace-filled action of the Holy Spirit in churches that have clearly become heretical". And recalling ROCOR's 1983 anathema against the branch theory of the Church, Bishop Gregory concluded: "In truth, not having looked into the matter seriously and forgetting about this anathematization which was affirmed earlier, our Council, however terrible it may be to acknowledge it, *has fallen under its own anathema*".[243]

Metropolitan Cyprian died in 2013 without having repented of his heretical ecclesiology.

By 1992 the Romanians had two million believers, four bishops, eighty parishes, nine large monasteries and many smaller ones, making them by far the largest True Orthodox jurisdiction in the world. Moreover, in their leader, Metropolitan Glycherius, who died on June 15/28, 1985, they have one of the most saintly figures in twentieth-century Church history. In 1997, in response to numerous visions, his relics were uncovered and found "to be dissolved to bones, but full of fragrance".[244] However, the Romanians had a stricter ecclesiology than the Cyprianites, chrismating new calendarists. So the question arises: why did they remain in communion with Cyprian and not with the other Greek Old Calendarists, to whom they were closer in terms of ecclesiology? The answer appeared to be that when the Callistite hierarchs made contact with the Romanians in the late 1970s, it was Cyprian who gave them help at a time of communist oppression. And for this they continued to be grateful. [245]

[242] Markou, op. cit.
[243] Grabbe, *Works*, vol. 4, p. 225.
[244] *Orthodox Tradition*, vol. XV, № 1, 1998, p. 45.
[245] Archimandrite Cyprian, Secretary of the Romanian Synod, personal communication, August, 1994.

## ***BOSTON SEPARATES***

Metropolitans Acacius of Diauleia and Gabriel of the Cyclades had refrained from joining the Synod under Archbishop Chrysostom, and in a publication entitled *An End to Silence* (1986) they fiercely criticised their former colleague's agreement to become archbishop. In retrospect, and in view of the collapse of the Synod again in 1995, it must be admitted that there was some justice in their criticism. The problems in the dioceses of Thessalonica and Astoria had not been resolved, and would not be resolved in the period 1985-1995. On the other hand, it could be argued that *someone* had to lead the remnants of the former Auxentiite Synod, and such a leader had to come from one of Metropolitans Acacius, Gabriel and Chrysostom, who alone had not participated in the sins of that Synod.

And it was now the turn of Metropolitans Acacius and Gabriel to make a mistake, when, early in 1987, they received under their omophorion 40 mainly Greek-American parishes led by the Holy Transfiguration Monastery, Boston.

When Metropolitan Philaret died on November 21, 1985, the Boston monastery immediately expressed its support for his successor, Metropolitan Vitaly (Ustinov), Thus on February 10, Archimandrite Panteleimon wrote: "The Synodal Church is a real standard of Orthodoxy.... Therefore, discerning where the Truth is found, we remain in unity under our bishops in the midst of many trials and temptations...because grace abides in the Synod.... We uphold our Synod primarily and foremostly as a standard of Orthodoxy. All others have betrayed the Truth. This was demonstrated of late by the election of our new Metropolitan."[246]

However, the same council which elected Metropolitan Vitaly also, writes Fr. Alexey Young, "appointed a special commission of two bishops to visit the Boston monastery and begin a private investigation into charges of sexual perversion. The commission presented its report at a meeting of the Synod on May 29, 1986, receiving testimony in person from four monks who had left the Holy Transfiguration Monastery. Fr. Panteleimon was present and denied the charges, but asked to be relieved of his position as abbot. The bishops granted his request, placing the monastery temporarily under Archbishop Anthony (Sinkevich) of Los Angeles and Southern California. The monks at the monastery in Boston, however, ignored this and elected one of their own – another monk who had also been charged with immorality – as abbot.

"For the next several months, information and testimony continued to be gathered, with no predetermination of Panteleimon's guilt or innocence. Looking back, the bishops may well feel that they should have hastened the investigation, for, during this period of time, an unprecedented explosion of protest erupted from the supporters of Fr. Panteleimon. The bishops were bombarded by hundreds of letters, petitions, phone calls, and personal visits – all of them protesting their 'Elder's'

[246] Fr. Alexey Young, *The Russian Orthodox Church Outside Russia*, San Bernardino, CA: the Borgo Press, 1993, pp. 75-76.

innocence and the unfair, even 'un-American' way in which they believed his case was being handled.[247]

"Simultaneously, Fr. Panteleimon began to make public his own list of grievances, announcing that the bishops were, practically speaking, abandoning the Anathema against Ecumenism and beginning to compromise the Faith. Secret plans and negotiations, he charged, were being worked out with the Moscow Patriarchate so that the Church Abroad could unite with the Mother Church by 1988 (the millennium of the Baptism of Russia). According to Panteleimon, this meant that the hierarchs had become, or were in the process of becoming, *heresiarchs*, and that the faithful had better look to their souls! This was a complete reversal of his published views of only months before.

"On November 25, 1986, Metropolitan Vitaly was asked by the Synod of Bishops to suspend Fr. Panteleimon and the abbot [Isaac] who had been uncanonically elected to succeed him, pending a canonical trial.[248] This was done on December 3; nine days later, Vitaly received a letter announcing that the monastery in Boston had left the Russian Orthodox Church Outside of Russia and was taking refuge under an unnamed Greek Old Calendar bishop.[249] Synod headquarters immediately declared this action to be '… a flagrant violation of the holy canons of the Church and… an attempt to avoid the consequences of any final decision a spiritual court might have

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[247] Archbishop Anthony wrote: "Fr. Panteleimon mentions the accusation that their monastery was in a demonic cult and that the investigation by the Synod was not finished. In fact, a thorough investigation was carried out by two hierarchs and both Fr. Panteleimon himself and ten witnesses were interrogated. When the former monks who had suffered were presenting their evidence, Fr. Panteleimon was completely besides himself and, losing his self-possession, shouted to the witnesses: 'Stop, don't speak!' There were 35 monastics in the monastery, and its external appearance was attractive: services every night, Greek chanting, everyone in monastic clothes and everyone receiving communion every night. However, something terrible was revealed. In the whole monastery only eight were Greeks, the rest were mainly Americans, converts from Protestantism, with an unknown or dubious past; among them were young ones and ones who had absolutely no knowledge of the spiritual life, nor of the Orthodox faith. Fr. Panteleimon had seduced them, and some sincerely believed his words that the sin of homosexuality is approved in Orthodoxy. After unnatural orgies everyone received communion. Fr. Panteleimon very quickly tonsured those entering the monastery, and therefore the external appearance of the monastery was deceptive. When the investigation was undertaken, Fr. Panteleimon gave us to understand that Greek Old Calendarist hierarchs had invited him to come over to them and that for that reason we could 'lose' the whole monastery. In violation of the rules of the Church Abroad, Fr. Panteleimon had not registered the monastery as being in the jurisdiction of our Synod, and for that reason, understanding that our Synod would not approve of what was happening, he left the Church Abroad together with all its property." (Letter to V.R., March 25 / April 7, 1995).

[248] The suspensions were in accordance with rule 159 of Peter the Great's Regulations of the Spiritual Consistories: "A clergyman who has been accused of a crime is to be suspended from serving… The order for this to be done is entrusted to the local Bishop, who is obligated to take care that those who are accused of grave violation of good conduct according to God's laws not approach to serve before the Altar of the Lord." Also, a commission was appointed to investigate the charges of immorality against Fr. Isaac, and Hieromonk Justin was appointed as temporary administrator of the monastery. (V.M.)

[249] The letter was dated November 25 / December 7. (V.M.)

made concerning the accusations [of immorality]… [This is an attempt] to flee from the spiritual authority of the Church's hierarchy…'"[250]

In their defence, the Bostonites declared that they were fleeing the ecumenism of ROCOR, its relapse into its former lax ways in relation to the "World Orthodox" only a year after the anathema against ecumenism. This anathema, as we have seen, was signed by all the ROCOR bishops and was entered into the Synodicon to be read on the Sunday of Orthodoxy each year. This was the achievement, within the Synod, especially of Metropolitan Philaret, the righteousness of whose stand against ecumenism and the MP was revealed on November 8/21, 1998, when his body was found to be incorrupt.[251] However, he found very little support among his fellow-bishops, and was only rarely able to impose his will, especially on the West European diocese under Archbishop Anthony of Geneva, from which several priests and parishes fled in the 1970s. Even with the more conservative hierarchs he sometimes had problems. Thus he once ordered the sprinkling with holy water of the church in the Monastery of the Holy Trinity, Jordanville, after Archbishop Averky had permitted Copts to serve there.[252]

After Metropolitan Philaret's death, a certain weakening in the confession of ROCOR *is* discernible, even if the contrast between the period before and after the metropolitan's death is not as sharp as the Bostonites make it out to be. Thus early in 1986 Archbishop Anthony of Geneva blessed the French Mission of ROCOR under Archimandrite Ambroise (Frontier) to concelebrate with the new calendarists when they were in Greece, but not with the Old Calendarists. They considered this to be contrary to the 1983 anathema and wrote to him: "In sending your clergy to concelebrate with the ecumenists or new calendarists, you place them under this anathema, which is a grave error… When you say that your clergy who desire to concelebrate with the ecumenists or new calendarists must, beforehand, ask for your blessing, you remind (us) of a father of a family, who would permit his children who would wish to throw themselves into the fire, to do so."[253]

Again, in October, 1986, at a clergy conference of the Midwest Diocese, Bishop Alypius of Cleveland, standing next to the icon of the Mother of God of Kursk, declared that "in spite of all the difficulties occurring throughout world-wide Orthodoxy, our Synod of Bishops of the Russian Church Abroad does not judge any other jurisdiction as being without grace or in heresy."[254]

Still more seriously, at Christmas, 1984, Archbishop Vitaly issued an Epistle declaring that the 1983 anathema was *not* of universal significance, but applied only to ecumenist members of ROCOR. Of course, the anathema was issued by a Local

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[250] Young, op. cit., pp. 77-78.
[251] "Incorrupt Relics Recovered", *Vertograd-Inform*, № 4, February, 1999, p. 8.
[252] "Metropolitan Philaret's Two Letters to Archbishop Averky", *Vertograd-Inform*, № 4, February, 1999, pp. 11-15.
[253] Archimandrite Ambroise, Priest Patric and Hieromonk Joseph, letter to Archbishop Anthony of Geneva, May 14/27, 1986.
[254] Fr. Alexey Young, "A Tireless Pilgrim", *Orthodox America,* vol. 7, № 4, October, 1986.

Council, not an Ecumenical one. But, as we have seen, this by no means meant that, as Vitaly and the opponents of the anathema were trying to say, the anathema in fact had *no power* over anyone outside ROCOR – which was equivalent, in effect, to annulling it. The Bostonites seized on this as evidence of the fall of ROCOR.[255] But since the epistle was issued only *after* departure, it was not direct justification of that departure…

In the opinion of the present writer, on the one hand the Bostonites *did* have a prima facie case for leaving ROCOR on the grounds of betrayal of the anathema against ecumenism. Moreover, it is clear that this was the decisive issue for many of the rank-and-file clergy and laity who followed them. On the other hand, the timing of the departure, the haste with which they left, and the abundant evidence of moral transgressions, makes it likely that the issue of ecumenism was not the real reason for *the leaders'* flight, but rather a fig-leaf to cover their fear of conviction at their forthcoming trial.

This is confirmed by Fr. Anthony Gavalas: "My position when we left the Synod was that we should commemorate no-one until we saw our way clearly in the confusion. I was told that while this would be possible for the monastery, it would be destructive to the Parishes. Then, within a few hours, we were told that we must all go under Archbishop Acacius immediately so that the monastery would be covered in the face of suspensions and depositions of Frs. Panteleimon and Isaac, and I, of course, cooperated."[256]

Among the hierarchs, only Bishop Gregory (Grabbe) supported the Boston monks. The Synod, he believed had acted hastily in relation both to them and to the defrocking of his son, Archimandrite Anthony.[257] He was promptly sacked from his post of Secretary of the ROCOR Synod after over fifty years work at the centre of the Church administration.[258]

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[255] See "Reflections on Metropolitan Vitaly's Nativity Epistle", *Orthodox Christian Witness*, February 16 / March 1, 1987; "An Annulment of the Anathema of 1983", *Orthodox Christian Witness*, May 4/17, 1987.

[256] Gavalas, letter of June 20 / July 3, 1987 to Fr. Neketas Palassis.

[257] The reason, according to Bishop Gregory, was his opposition to Vitaly's plans to sell the Synod building in New York (Letter to Abbess Magdalina, May 11/24, 1986; *Church News*, June, 2003, vol. 14, № 65 (#119), pp. 10-11). Bishop Gregory's daughter and Archimandrite Anthony's sister, Mrs. Anastasia Shatilova, writes: "The necessity to dismiss by any means possible the Head of the Jerusalem Ecclesiastical Mission [Archimandrite Anthony] of 17 years – is explained rather simply. Archimandrite Anthony, shortly before the repose of Metropolitan Philaret won a court case against the state of Israel over property belonging to the Mission, confiscated by the former in 1948, and Israel was to pay back 7 million dollars. This sum is laughably small, considering the true value of the confiscated property, but the Mission's lawyer believed that the material, about to be filed against the USSR, using the precedent of the case against Israel, had all the chances of winning. The case against the USSR, over the seized Gorny Convent and Holy Trinity Church with numerous buildings, also belonged to the Mission – was to start within a couple of weeks. This is the main reason why intrigues were absolutely necessary to remove this Chief of the Mission" (*Church News*, July, 2003, vol. 14, № 66 (#120), pp. 10-11).

[258] See his letter of April 27 / May 10, 1986 to Archbishop Seraphim of Chicago, in *Church News*, July, 2003, vol. 14, #6 (120), p. 11, and to Metropolitan Vitaly of May 17/30, 1994 (*Church News*, July, 2003,

Patrick Barrett considers that the schism could have been avoided if Bishop Gregory had still been at the helm: "Both Father Panteleimon and Father Isaac were prepared to step aside. True panic only hit the monastery and the parishes allied to it when the Synod refused to allow Father Justin to be named acting abbot. That's when people began to believe that the synod's true purpose was to seize the monastery. Then people began to think, well, they've eliminated Bishop Gregory and now they're going after Father Panteleimon, so they're obviously trying to take out everybody who opposes union with the MP. Bishop Gregory could have handled this situation easily. In fact, many of the people who ended up leaving ROCOR in 1986 were calling Bishop Gregory hoping for help or reassurance, but who was Bishop Gregory? By then, he was nobody to the Synod. Bishop Gregory had moral authority with the monastery and those parishes, with his help, the synod could even have removed Fathers Panteleimon and Isaac and still not lost the monastery and parishes."[259]

Be that as it may, the Bostonites fled to Metropolitans Acacius and Gabriel. However, in the summer of 1987, with the exception of Fr. Anthony Gavalas of Astoria, New York, all of the 40 parishes left the two metropolitans *giving no canonical reason* and came under the omophorion of Auxentius. Now it may be asked: why did the Bostonites not join Auxentius in the first place? The answer is clear: the crimes of Auxentius were known to Panteleimon, and more than one person who knew him well has testified that for several years before he joined Auxentius he considered him to be a traitor to Orthodoxy. It was because of this strongly expressed rejection of Auxentius that the Bostonites did not join him at the beginning, but instead joined the two independent metropolitans, who were not tainted with Auxentius' crimes.

So far, an argument can be adduced in defence of the Bostonites' actions. But then why, only six months later, did they leave the two metropolitans and join Auxentius? Because Metropolitan Gabriel, disturbed by the accusations against Panteleimon, had separated from Metropolitan Acacius. This meant that the Bostonites now had no possibility of achieving one of their principal aims – a bishop or bishops of their own for America. Auxentius' Synod, on the other hand, was notoriously willing to consecrate new bishops. So it became expedient to keep silent about Auxentius' crimes (which, according to witnesses, Fr. Panteleimon had been more than willing to condemn in previous years), and to seek refuge in this most unsafe haven.

That the Bostonites were seeking of their bishop of their own is evident from a letter of Fr. Niketas Palassis to Fr. Anthony Gavalas: "Frankly, we were stunned and sorrowed by Metropolitan Gabriel's departure. Actually, it appeared we had been detoured and led into a dead-end street. Without a second bishop to give us support

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vol. 13, #6 (107), pp. 3-4. Both of the deputy-presidents of the Synod, Archbishops Anthony of Geneva and Seraphim of Chicago, disagreed with the decision.

[259] Barrett, "[paradosis] ROCOR's biggest error", orthodox-tradition@yahoogroups.com, 21 July, 2004.

and credibility, we face the prospect of being one of the hundreds of vaganti groups which flood our nation. Without at least a second bishop we can have no hope that the clergymen who are watching us so carefully will ever join with us. Conversations with several of them have confirmed that fact. They are not attracted to us with a single bishop…"[260]

Further proof is provided by the letter of their secretary, dated July 2/15, 1987 to Metropolitan Acacius, in which he writes: "It is evident to all that without a hierarch who knows both English and Greek and who has sufficient theological training, the flock in America, which is constituted of both English and Greek-speaking faithful, cannot be properly served."

However, it was obvious that their bishop's not knowing English was not a canonical reason for leaving him. So the Bostonites invented another reason. They claimed that in the last six months they had "formed a more precise picture of ecclesiastical matters [in Greece] which – to an especially greater extent in recent times – have become obscured under the prism of subjective judgements, or unverified information, and this because of the difficulties of communication between the New World and Greece. Thus, they have arrived at the conclusion and conviction that, today, the reasons for your position of protest and voluntary absence from the meetings of the Synod of Archbishop Auxentios have ceased."[261]

These statements are extremely vague – we are given no idea of what new facts emerged that could so radically change their opinion of Auxentius and prove his innocence. In truth, there were no such facts. The Bostonites were thoroughly acquainted with the Church situation in Greece; it was not new knowledge that had changed the situation but the departure of Metropolitan Gabriel from their Church.

Another Bostonite argument was that since Metropolitan Acacius had stated both that "if you are able to find hierarchs who have Apostolic succession, you should turn to them", and that "the judgement, the choice and the formulation of your future course depends on you"[262], this meant that he had blessed them to join Auxentius.

But Metropolitan Acacius' extremely negative attitude towards Auxentius was well known to all. It was obvious that by a "hierarch who has Apostolic succession" he did not mean Auxentius. This was evident from the letter he wrote to his spiritual children when he heard that they were going to invite Auxentius to their conference in Worcester, Massachusetts in July, 1987:-

"While we were preserving vividly and indelibly the wonderful image of all that we had seen and heard during our recent visit to your Orthodox parishes, suddenly

[260] Palassis, letter of June 15/28, 1987.
[261] Letter of Fr. Christos Constantinou, July 2/15, 1987.
[262] Letter of Metropolitan Acacius to Protopresbyter Panagiotes Carras and the most venerable presbyters and hieromonks with him, February 17, 1987, Protocol № 282.

the information came, like a lightning bolt out of a clear sky, that a few of your spiritual leaders are thinking of going under the irrevocably fallen former Archbishop Auxentius.

"We hope that it is only some malicious rumour designed to defame your Orthodox ecclesiastical communities before all Orthodox everywhere and to render futile the struggle you have waged on behalf of the strictness of Orthodoxy. That is what we believe, for only the utmost madness and morbid recklessness would otherwise explain the subjugation of a Movement on behalf of piety and the preservation of the traditional genuineness of our Holy Orthodoxy under a leader who so tragically failed and brought the Church of the True Orthodox in Greece into contempt and disrepute.

"A multitude of uncanonical actions and illegal ordinations done with supreme disdain for the authority of our Holy Church, the ungodfearing trampling down of the Sacred Canons, and the devious manner of the'ordination to the episcopate' of the piteous and miserable Dorotheus Tsakos render Auxentius guilty before Divine and human justice, as well as before the impartial and unbribable judgement of history itself.

"Can it be that you seek refuge in such a wreckage of a house? Shudder, O sun, and groan, O earth! If that be the case, you will with your own hands destroy your own work and raze your spiritual edifices to the ground. Moreover, you offer to your enemies unexpected arguments against yourselves. These are much more powerful than the arguments with which they presently seek to sully the reputation of the pious and virtuous clergymen who, at the present moment, stand at the head of your struggle!

"And, above all, such a thoughtless and frivolous action will sever the unity of your ecclesiastical communities because those among you whose souls have a more acute sense of smell will not be able to tolerate the stench of that devious failure Auxentius' condemned and illegal actions.

"It is out of a pained heart that we write the above so that the beacon of Orthodoxy will not be so ignominiously extinguished, the beacon which is lit by the strictness of your Orthodoxy and your blameless ecclesiastical ethos.

"And besides, as long as you came freely and unconstrained by anyone and committed the episcopal supervision of your parishes to me, I condemn any discussions with Auxentius as divisive acts and I advise you to cut them off completely.

"Do not forget that 'he who acts in secret from his bishops serves the devil', according to St. Ignatius the Godbearer…"[263]

[263] Metropolitan Acacius, letter of July 1, 1987, Protocol № 287. For other criticism of the Bostonite position, see Letter of Reader Polychronius to Monk Pachomius, October 12/25, 1989; "Pis'mo

However, the Bostonites concealed the letter of their archpastor from his flock and, to the great distress of many clergy and laity, removed almost all their parishes from the jurisdiction of a true bishop to that of a condemned schismatic, *giving no canonical justification whatsoever for their act.*

In December, the former French mission of the Russian Church Abroad in Paris, led by Archimandrite Ambroise Frontier, left the Chrysostomites because of dissatisfaction with a priest in the south of France and followed the Bostonites under Auxentius' omophorion.[264] Before his death in 1994, Auxentius ordained several bishops for this group, who now call themselves "The Holy Orthodox Church in North America" (HOCNA). And so Auxentius' Church, which had almost died out in Greece, received a new lease of life. He proceeded to acquit the Bostonite leaders of homosexuality.[265]

However, in 2012 Abbot Isaac admitted publicly that the charges against Fr. Panteleimon were true… This, together with HOCNA's embracing of the name-worshipping theory, led to most of HOCNA's clergy and parishes leaving and joining the Florinite Old Calendarists under Archbishop Kallinikos of Athens…

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Arkhiep. Antonia Los-Anzhelosskogo V. Redechkinu" (A Letter of Archbishop Anthony of Los Angeles to V. Redechkin), *Russkoe Pravoslavie (Russian Orthodoxy)*, № 4 (8), 1997, pp. 26-28. For the Bostonites' account of these events, see *The Struggle against Ecumenism*, op. cit., pp. 125-160.

[264] The present writer's parish in England was being served by one of the French priests at this time. When he protested to Fr. Ambroise that he felt he had no good canonical reason for following Ambroise out of the Chrysostomite Synod, Fr. Ambroise said to him: "Yes, you have no good reason; you should stay."

[265] But Fr. Anthony Gavalas wrote: "Given Archbishop Auxentius' toleration, at least, of homosexuals in his own jurisdiction, of what use will be an exoneration signed by him? Will it not allow our enemies to say that the monastery is guilty and so placed itself in a jurisdiction tolerant of such violations?" (quoted by Archpriest Alexander Lebedev, "Re: [paradosis] Re: Re 1986-1987", orthodox-tradition@yahoogroups.com, January 12, 2002. Fr. Anthony later joined the Matthewites and is now a metropolitan.

## ***SUPER-ECUMENISM (2)***

In the second half of the 1980s Pope John Paul II began to raise the tempo of super-ecumenism. While remaining conservative in his moral teaching, he showed himself to be the most extreme radical in his dogmatic teaching. Thus in 1985 he blessed the publication, by the Vatican's Pontifical "Commission for Union with Non-Christians", of a twelve-page document containing new directives "for a correct presentation of Jews and Judaism in sermons and in the catechism of the Catholic Church". The twelfth paragraph of this document declared: "Heeding the same God, Who has spoken on the foundation of the same word (that the Jews have), we must bear witness according to the same remembrance and with a common hope in Him Who is the Lord of history. Therefore it is necessary for us to take upon ourselves the obligation to prepare the world for the coming of the Messiah, working together for social justice, for the respect of the rights of the human personality, and of the nation, and of international social reconstruction. The law of love for one's neighbour, the common hope of the Kingdom of God, and the great heritage of the prophets motivate us, both Christians and Jews, to do this. Such a conception, taught sufficiently early through the catechism, would educate young Christians for a cooperation and collaboration with the Jews which would exceed the limits of simple dialogue."[266] It would indeed, for it would involve Catholics becoming Jews, awaiting the same "Messiah" that the Jews are waiting for – that is, the Antichrist!…

Then, in 1986 the Pope invited the leaders of all the world's religions to pray for "peace in our time". "On the joint prayers in Assisi (Italy) we have documentary films. How useful it would be to show them to the zealots of 'Orthodoxy Soviet-style'! Behind the tribune there followed, one after the other, Catholics, Protestants, African idolaters in war-paint, Red Indians in feathers, an invoker of snakes, the Dalai Lama, who confesses himself to be a god, Metropolitan Philaret [Denisenko] of the Moscow Patriarchate, and many, many others, raising up prayers behind the tribune – each in his own style: the Red Indian smoked the pipe of peace, the invoker of snakes brought his cobra. And over all this there ruled, as the chief pagan priest, the Pope of Rome, whom the whole of this multi-coloured crowd in feathers, tattoos, loin-cloths and metropolitan mitres came up to greet in a luxurious, colourful and unending queue – over which there hovered, unseen, the 'positive relationship' and blessing of Patriarch Pimen…"[267]

An Italian Catholic newspaper, *Si Si No No* wrote: "Never has our Lord been so outraged, never have His holy places been so profaned, His Vicar so humiliated, His people so scandalized by His own ministers, as at Assisi. The superstitions of the

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[266] Bishop Gregory (Grabbe), "Partnership – the Pope and an Atheist", *Orthodox Life,* vol. 42, № 3, May-June, 1992, p. 16.

[267] *Obnovlentsy i Moskovskaia Patriarkhia: preemstvo ili evoliutsia? (The Renovationists and the Moscow Patriarchate: succession or evolution?),* Suzdal, 1997, p. 15. In September, 1998 the Pope said: "Through the practice of what is good in their own religious traditions, and following the dictates of their consciences, members of other religions positively respond to God's invitation, even though they may not recognize Him as their Saviour" (*Vertograd* (English edition), December, 1998, p. 11)

several false religions practised at Assisi pale by comparison with the betrayal of our Lord by these ministers. In St. Peter's the bonzes adored the Dalai Lama (for them, a reincarnation of Buddha). In that church a statue of the Buddha was placed atop the Tabernacle on the main altar. In St. Gregory's the Red Indians prepared their pipe of peace on the altar; in Santa Maria Maggiore's, Hindus, sitting around the altar, invoked the whole range of Hindu gods; in Santa Maria degli Angeli's, John-Paul II sat in a semi-circle of wholly identical seats amidst the heads of other religions so that there should be neither first nor last."[268]

Even as ecumenism reached its zenith, difficulties were encountered. The Pope, in particular, in spite of his extreme ecumenism, was having difficulties in his relations with the Jews, with the Anglicans and with the Orthodox, not to mention the liberal wing of his own confession.[269] Thus in May, 1987, during his visit to Germany, the Pope planned to canonize Edith Stein, a Jewish convert to Catholicism who became a Carmelite nun and was tortured to death by the Nazis in Auschwitz. In memory of this new saint the Polish Carmelite Order decided to construct a small monastery on the site of the former concentration camp. But this aroused great fury among the Jews, who claimed that Auschwitz was "a Jewish monument" and that the canonization of a Jewish convert to Catholicism was "not particularly tactful", since it implied that for the Pope only those Jews who converted to Catholicism were good. Eventually, the Jews dropped their objections to the canonization; but the nine Catholic nuns were forced to leave Auschwitz and abandon their plans of building a monastery there.[270]

Again, difficulties arose in relations with the Anglicans because of the decision of the Anglican Synod, in March, 1987, to allow women to serve as priests by a 317 to 145 vote. This decision was made in spite of the fact that it had been made quite clear to the Anglicans that their ordination of women priests would endanger ecumenical relations with the Orthodox and the Catholics. It demonstrated that the real inner dynamic of ecumenism is *not the desire for union, but the desire for the new* – that is, modernism and secularism in all its forms, including feminism.

Although Rome remained committed to a male celibate priesthood, it, was affected by these modernist winds, as Malachi Martin wrote: "A peculiar piece of desecration of Christ's Church is being committed by the anti-church in its fomenting of the feminist movement among female religious. Jesus, in his sufferings, had at least the consolation of knowing that the women among his followers did not scatter like scared rabbits, nor did they betray him. They stayed with him to the bitter end of Calvary. Today, the women's movement in the Church, certainly allowed and in some cases encouraged by the anti-Church, is bent on desecrating the Body of the Church in the Sacrament, in the sacred vows of religion, in the precious function of priest, pastor and teacher. All this can be traced to the Judas complex,

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[268] See also Leslie Childe in *The Daily Telegraph*, October 28, 1986, p. 7.
[269] "The Pope and his Critics", *The Economist*, December 9, 1989.
[270] "Vatikan i Evrei" (The Vatican and the Jews), *Pravoslavnaia Rus' (Orthodox Russia)*, № 8 (1340), April 15/28, 1987, p. 9 ®.

part of the mystery of iniquity that is now operating in high gear throughout the Roman Catholic institutional organization."[271]

A third difficulty was the increasing tension in Catholic-Orthodox relations. These relations had reached a new high in November, 1987, when Patriarch Demetrius went to Rome and concelebrated with the Pope (up to but not including communion from a common chalice[272]); at which point it seemed as if nothing could prevent the full union of the Orthodox Churches with Rome. But while the Pope's ecumenism was welcome, his anti-communism was not – at least in the eyes of the KGB agents in cassocks who constituted the leaders of East European Orthodoxy. Thus in 1986 Patriarch Pimen publicly criticised the Pope for criticising socialism and dialectical materialism. "We speak out," he said, "for the cooperation of Christians, Marxists and all people of good will… which only increases our perplexity at those sections of the recent Encyclical of Pope John-Paul II, Dominum et vivificantam which are devoted to materialism and Marxist doctrine…. [The encyclical] contains elements directed towards the division and opposition of Christians and Marxists… In the encyclical an attempt is made to analyse the system of materialism… as an ideology… It is quite obvious that such a combined application of materialist doctrine to life can be found first of all in the socialist states and countries, which have chosen the socialist path of development… It is precisely in these countries that the creation of a new life by the efforts of believers and unbelievers working together is being realised… This reality, as we understand it, contradicts those positions of the encyclical in which it is affirmed that materialism as a system of thought has as its culmination – death… Insofar as 'signs of death' are indicated in relation 'to the dark shadow of materialist civilisation', the impression is created, in the context of a critique of Marxist doctrine, that in all this the states and people who follow the socialist path of development are guilty… It remains to express our profound sadness at such a position."[273]

Even in an age distinguished by unheard-of betrayals of Orthodoxy, this amazes one by its audacity: the leader of the Russian Orthodox Church officially defending the doctrine of materialism!!!

A critical point was reached in the millennial year of the Baptism of Rus' in 1988. Since the Baptism of Rus' in 988 had taken place when the Eastern and Western Churches were in full communion, this festivity might have been expected to have ecumenical potential. However, the nationalist revival had begun in the Baltic States, and the Russian secular and ecclesiastical authorities feared that if the Pope were invited to the country, his presence might provide a focus for separatist sentiment in the Baltic and Ukraine as it had in Poland earlier in the decade. So they offered him an invitation on condition he did not visit those areas; which offer was refused…

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[271] Martin, *The Keys of This Blood,* New York: Simon & Schuster, 1990, p. 676.
[272] "O 'Patriarkhis' Dimitrios symprosevkhetai kai sylleitourgei me tous airetikous" (Patriarch Demetrios prays together and liturgises with heretics), *Agios Agathangelos Esphigmenitis (St. Agathangelos of Esphigmenou)*, № 104, November-December, 1988, pp. 10-44.
[273] *Zhurnal Moskovskoj Patriarkhii (The Journal of the Moscow Patriarchate)*, № 10, 1986.

Encouraged by the radicalism of their "elder brother", the Pope, Orthodox leaders plunged to new depths of apostasy. Thus in 1989 Patriarch Parthenius of Alexandria declared: The prophet Mohammed is an apostle. He is a man of God, who worked for the Kingdom of God and created Islam, a religion to which belong one billion people… Our God is the Father of all men, even of the Muslims and Buddhists. I believe that God loves the Muslims and the Buddhists… When I speak against Islam or Buddhism, then I am not found in agreement with God… My God is the God of other men also. He is not only the God of the Orthodox. This is my position."

A Greek newspaper fittingly commented on these words: "So 'Mohammed is an apostle' and the new-martyrs, then, are 'not found in agreement with God!'"[274] Another newspaper said: "He denies Christ and likens himself to Mohammed!"[275] Which amounted, according to the theologian A.D. Delimbasis, to "the mortal sin of denial of one's faith. Even were Patriarch Parthenius to repent of this, he can be accepted in the Orthodox Church only as a layman. 'Should he repent, let him be received as a layman,' says the Canon [Apostolic Canon 62]."[276]

The newspapers and theologians might criticise the patriarch's blasphemy, but not one of the Local Orthodox Churches did. On the contrary: they seemed by their actions to express their approval of the Alexandrian patriarch's conversion to Islam, and strove to imitate it. Thus Metropolitan Pitirim of Volokolamsk, the head of the MP's publishing department, instead of using the new-found freedom of his Church to publish desperately needed Bibles and patristic literature, blessed the publication of – the Koran!

Extreme though Catholic ecumenism might be, it did not go so far as to include communism and dialectical materialism in its embrace. In fact, as is well-known, Pope John-Paul II played a part in the downfall of communism in his native Poland, and hence in the rest of Eastern Europe. The "honour" for taking ecumenism to the extreme even of embracing materialism belongs, unfortunately, not to the Catholics, but to the pseudo-Orthodox.

The only exception to this trend of Orthodox super-ecumenism was Patriarch Diodorus of Jerusalem, who left the ecumenical movement on May 22, 1989, declaring with his Synod: "The Orthodox Church firmly believes that She possesses the full, complete truth and that She is the One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church, the repository of Divine Grace and Truth. She alone is the ark of security within which the unsullied teachings and sacred Tradition of the Faith are to be found and the fullness of their salvific character and expression. Further participation by the Orthodox in the dialogues is now becoming harmful, damaging

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[274] *Epignosis (Knowledge),* December, 1989, 20 (G). See "Vremia Dejstvovat'" (It is Time to Act), *Moskovskij Tserkovnij Vestnik (Moscow Ecclesiastical Herald)*, № 17, December, 1989, p. 3; *Orthodoxos Typos (Orthodox Press)* (Athens), № 854, October 6, 1989; *La Lumière Du Thabor (The Light of Tabor)* (Paris), № 24, 1990, pp. 121-23.

[275] *Neoi Anthropoi (New Men),* February 24, 1989.

[276] Delimbasis, *Rebuttal of an Anticanonical "Verdict",* Athens, 1993, p. 12.

and, indeed, dangerous. The non-Orthodox are taking advantage of these theological dialogues and are using these contacts against the Orthodox Church. Here in the Holy Land especially they are now saying, 'Together with the Orthodox we are trying to find the truth.' Thus, day after day they are increasingly successful in their proselytising and draw Orthodox believers into their ranks. The non-Orthodox are also showing photographs and video films to our people in which our representatives appear embracing the non-Orthodox and they tell our faithful: 'the union of the churches has come; come to our churches for joint prayers.' To such acts must also be added their tempting offers of houses (and housing is a pressing problem for the majority of the Arab population), offers of jobs and of financial assistance if the Orthodox will only join their religion. This draining away or, rather, bleeding of our Orthodox flock, but above all our primary desire and obligation to preserve the purity of the Orthodox Faith and Tradition from the dangerous activities of non-Orthodox has compelled us to put an end to the dialogues, not only with the Anglicans who for some time now have been ordaining women, but also with the Roman Catholics, the Lutherans, as well as with those Protestant denominations with whom the Church of Jerusalem has only more recently had theological dialogues."[277]

Patriarch Diodorus showed that he was serious by refusing to sign the agreement of Chambésy with the Monophysites in 1990; and in 1992, at the meeting of the heads of the Orthodox Churches in Constantinople in 1992, he argued forcefully for breaking *all* dialogue with the Vatican (see next chapter). However, these objections were exceptions to the general rule, which was: the rapid spread, even beyond the increasingly porous iron curtain, of both inter-Christian and inter-faith Ecumenism…

[277] *Agiotafitis (Holy Sepulchre)*, translated in *The Canadian Orthodox Missionary Journal*, year 16, issue 5, № 134, September-October, 1989, p. 2.

## *ROCOR AND THE CATACOMBS*

The crushing of the dissident movement in the Soviet Union in the early 1980s had a temporarily sobering effect on ROCOR, and led to a very important ecclesiastical act: the canonization of the Holy New Martyrs of Russia, headed by Tsar-Martyr Nicholas II, in New York in November, 1981. News of this event seeped into the Soviet Union, and ROCOR's icon and service to the new martyrs became more and more widely used even among members of the MP. It was these prayers to the holy new martyrs, more than the support of the Pope for anti-communists in Poland, that was the real catalyst for glasnost' and perestroika, and hence the fall of communism in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe as a whole.

The weakening of communism raised hopes of a mass movement of believers out of the MP into the True Church. But this raised the question: which Church – the Catacomb Church inside Russia, or ROCOR? In either case, the question of the relationship between ROCOR and the Catacomb Church needed to be clarified.

For some years, the ROCOR Synod had continued to have contacts with Catacomb clergy, some of whom began to commemorate Metropolitan Philaret while others were actually received under his omophorion. Thus in 1977, after the death of their Catacomb archpastor, Archbishop Anthony (Galynsky-Mikhailovsky), fourteen clergy - Igumens Barsanuphius, Nicholas and Anthony, Hieromonks Michael, Michael, Raphael, Nicholas, Nicholas, Nathaniel, Epiphanius, Basil, Prochorus and Sergius, and Priests Alexis and Michael - were received "at a distance" into ROCOR.[278]

The presence of a sizeable group of Catacomb clergy under the omophorion of ROCOR naturally led to the raising of the question of the consecration of a bishop for the Catacomb Church. Vitaly Shumilo writes: "The question of the reestablishment of the episcopate of the Catacomb Church was raised at the Hierarchical Synod of ROCOR [in 1981]. It was decided secretly to tonsure and ordain to the episcopate a clergyman of the West European diocese whose sister lived in the USSR [Hieromonk Barnabas (Prokofiev)], thanks to which he could more easily obtain a visa. The Council entrusted this secretly ordained bishop to secretly

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[278] Metropolitan Epiphanius (Kaminsky), personal communication, May, 1995. The text of the resolution of the ROCOR Synod was as follows: "There were discussions on the question of the fourteen clerics accepted into communion of prayer from the Catacomb Church who submitted their petitions to the Hierarchical Synod through Archimandrite Misael of the monastery of St. Panteleimon on the Holy Mountain, which were received on November 26 / December 7, 1977. At that time the Hierarchical Synod of the ROCOR in its session of November 26 / December 7, 1977 accepted the following resolution:

"'Trusting the witness of the fourteen priests that their reposed leader, Archbishop Anthony (Galynsky) was correctly ordained to the episcopate, and carried out his service secretly from the civil authorities, it has been decided to accept them into communion of prayer, having informed them that they can carry out all those sacred actions which priests can carry out according to the Church canons, and also giving the monastic clerics the right to carry out monastic tonsures. They are to be informed of this in the same way as their address was received.'"

ordain Fr. Lazarus to the episcopate in order that he should lead the catacomb clergy and their communities."[279]

According to Matushka Anastasia Shatilova, the daughter of Bishop Gregory Grabbe, the decision was made by Metropolitan Philaret, Archbishop Vitaly and Archbishop Anthony of Geneva, and she, as being the person who printed the documents, was the only other person who knew about it.[280] In the next year, 1982, Archbishop Anthony and Bishop Mark of Berlin consecrated Hieromonk Barnabas as Bishop of Cannes.[281] He then travelled secretly to Moscow and ordained Fr. Lazarus as Bishop of Tambov in his flat on May 10.[282]

In May, 1990, when Lazarus was able to travel to New York, cheirothesia was performed on him by ROCOR bishops in order to correct his original cheirotonia at the hands of one bishop only.

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[279] Shumilo, "Kratkaia Spravka o Istorii RIPTs" (A Short Note on the History of the Russian True Orthodox Church), 2008."Godovschina vosstanovlenia apostol'skoj preemstvennosti v Russkoj Katakombnoj Istinno-Pravoslavnoj Tserkvi" (The Anniversary of the Restoration of Apostolic Succession in the Russian Catacomb True Orthodox Church), http://catacomb.org.ua/modules.php?name=Pages&go=print_page&pid=677.

[280] Shatilova, as quoted by Fr. Roman Pavlov.

[281] The official ROCOR account was published on August 1/14, 1990: "In 1982 his Eminence Anthony, Archbishop of Geneva and Western Europe, together with his Eminence Mark, Bishop of Berlin and Germany, on the orders of the Hierarchical Synod of the Russian Orthodox Church Abroad, secretly performed an Episcopal ordination on Hieromonk Barnabas (Prokofiev), so that through the cooperation of these archpastors the Church life of the Catacomb Orthodox Church in Russia might be regulated. Since external circumstances no longer compel either his Eminence Bishop Lazarus in Russia, or his Eminence Bishop Barnabas in France to remain as secret Hierarchs of our Russian Church Abroad, the Hierarchical Synod is now officially declaring this fact." ("Zaiavlenie Arkhierejskago Sinoda Russkoj Pravoslavnoj Tserkvi Zagranitsej" (Declaration of the Hierarchical Synod of the Russian Orthodox Church Abroad), *Pravoslavnaia Rus' (Orthodox Russia)*, № 18 (1423), September 15/28, 1990, p. 16.

The ordination papers were signed by Metropolitan Philaret, Archbishop Vitaly, Archbishop Anthony of Geneva and Bishop Gregory Grabbe (letter to the present writer from Matushka Anastasia Shatilova, October 3, 2000).

[282] "In a Gramota of the ROCOR Synod dated May 3/16, 1990 the following was said about this: 'Archimandrite Lazarus (Zhurbenko) is elected by the Russian Orthodox Church that is in the Catacombs and is confirmed and established as bishop of the God-saved city of Tambov by the Sacred Hierarchical Synod of the Russian Orthodox Church Abroad in accordance with the rite of the Holy Apostolic Eastern Church, with the aid of the all-accomplishing and all-holy Spirit, in the year of the incarnation of God the Word 1982, on the 27th day of April, in the city of Moscow, being ordained by hierarchs of the Russian Orthodox Church Abroad by order of the Hierarchical Council of 1981. The ordination of his Grace Lazarus took place in the special circumstances elicited by the difficulties of the present time, which is why the ordination was carried out in secret.'

"In another Synodal document, no. II/35/R, it was confirmed: 'Bishop Lazarus (Zhurbenko) has been ordained by order of the Hierarchical Council of the Russian Orthodox Church Abroad as BISHOP for the regeneration and leadership of the Church in Russia.' (Shumilo, op. cit.)

"Also, in the witness dated September 22 / October 5, 1989 signed by the First Deputy of the First-Hierarch of ROCOR it says: 'His Grace Bishop Lazarus has been canonically ordained by the episcopate of the Russian Orthodox Church Abroad and is appointed to serve the Orthodox Christians of the Russian Church Catacombs.'

Since this event aroused considerable controversy, it is necessary to delve a little more into its background…

At the beginning of the 1960s, Monk Theodosius (Zhurbenko), the future Archbishop Lazarus, made contact, via Archimandrite Eugene (Zhukov) of Mount Athos, with ROCOR's Archbishop Leontius (Filippovich) of Chile, who had been a catacomb priest in the Ukraine from 1937 before being consecrated Bishop of Zhitomir by the Ukrainian Autonomous Church in November, 1941.

"By means of coded correspondence," writes Shumilo, "many widowed True Orthodox pastors and believers had communion through Monk Theodosius with ROCOR Archbishop Leontius (Filippovich) of Chile, through whom spiritual direction and communion of the True Orthodox Church was realized with the Russian Church Abroad.

"After establishing the correspondence, Archbishop Leontius took an active part in the life of the clergy and flock of the Catacomb Church. He secretly received under his omophorion many catacomb priests. In the widowed Catacomb Church in the Homeland the True Orthodox clergy and believers began to consider Archbishop Leontius to be their kir-hierarch. Thus in the 1960s, thanks to the efforts of the future catacomb Archbishop Lazarus, secret spiritual communion was established between the widowed Catacomb TOC in the Homeland and ROCOR, and in the TOC – the commemoration of the first-hierarchs of ROCOR…

"Vladyka Leontius had the intention of secretly visiting the USSR to carry out ordinations also in the Catacomb Church. But these plans were not destined to be realized. Not having the opportunity to go to the USSR, he gave his written blessing to resort to such enforced practices as the reception of priesthood from hierarchs of the MP who had not soiled themselves by cooperation with the communist authorities and ecumenism.[283] Thus Archbishop Leontius sent Monk Theodosius (Zhurbenko) under obedience to be ordained by his former cell-attendant, who had been imprisoned for twelve years in Stalin's camps in Kolyma, the disgraced Bishop Benjamin (Novitsky) of Irkutsk. During the years of the German occupation Vladyka Leontius was in obedience to Bishop Benjamin, who had been the deputy of the Pochayev Lavra, and in 1941 he received ordination to the episcopate from his hands. Vladyka Benjamin was completely against the MP's apostasy from the faith and so remained in disgrace.

"In 1971 the former Monk Theodosius was secretly ordained as Priest Lazarus (Zhurbenko) for the Catacomb Church.

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[283] Thus "on the recommendation of Archbishop Leontius," writes Shumilo (op. cit.), Theodosius "was sent by the catacomb clergy to negotiate with the disgraced MP hierarch Hermogen (Golubev), who had been 'retired' by order of the Moscow Patriarch to the Zhirovitsky monastery in Belorussia. However, although Archbishop Hermogen respected the Catacomb Church, he refused to join Her out of fear that because of him it would be easier for the KGB to purge and finally annihilate the TOC."

"Hieromonk Lazarus worked tirelessly at gathering into one the catacomb communities scattered and dispersed throughout the USSR. By the middle of the 1970s he had founded a series of secret catacomb monasteries in the Kuban. He tonsured into the schema with the name of Seraphim the well-known catacomb elder-confessor Fr. Vissarion (Markov) from Tambov, who in his will entrusted the care of his catacomb flock to Fr. Lazarus. Before his death Fr. Timothy (Nesgovorov), who had been ordained by Schema-Bishop Peter (Ladygin), and others entrusted their flocks to the care of Fr. Lazarus. By the end of the 1970s many widowed catacomb communities from Kazakhstan and Siberia to the Ukraine and Belorussia had come under the care of Fr. Lazarus. They all… and oriented themselves on spiritual union with ROCOR, the canonicity of whose episcopate was irreproachable."[284]

However, many Catacomb Christians did not recognize Fr. Lazarus, considering his ordination in the MP to be completely invalid. According to one source, he sought ordination in the MP only after being refused it by Archbishop Anthony Galynsky – which may explain his hostile attitude towards Archbishop Anthony later.[285] According to another source, on returning to the Catacomb Church after four years in the MP, Fr. Lazarus was instrumental in betraying Catacomb Christians to the KGB and in sowing such distrust towards Bishop Theodosius (Bakhmetev) (+1986) that almost the whole of his flock deserted him.[286]

As a result, according to Shatilova, the highly experienced Josephite priest Fr. Michael Rozhestvensky became "the initiator of the complete rejection of the then priest Lazarus Zhurbenko because of the latter's departing to the MP for his ordination. At a meeting of catacomb clergy in the city of Tambov in 1978, in the presence of the still-living Abbot P., Fr. Vissarion and others, Fr. Michael confirmed this position." [287] This fact, according to Matushka Anastasia, was completely unknown to the ROCOR Synod when they came to decide on the consecration of a bishop for the Catacomb Church. Otherwise, she says, the ROCOR bishops would hardly have chosen to consecrate Lazarus to the episcopate.

The candidacy of Fr. Lazarus was put forward by Archbishop Anthony of Geneva, who had received him into his diocese, and then, on January 11, 1981, raised him to the rank of archimandrite in absentia.[288] Archbishop Anthony had been asked by Fr. Gleb Yakunin to consecrate a catacomb bishop for Russia, and Lazarus' name

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[284] Shumilo, op. cit.

[285] Metropolitan Epiphanius (Kaminsky), personal communication, May, 1995. See also http://apologetika.com/modules.php?op=modload&name=News&sid=34&file=article&pageid=3.

[286] See *Kto est' kto v rossijskikh katakombakh*, pp. 66-69, and E.A. Petrova, "Perestroika Vavilonskoj Bashni – poslednij shans vselukavogo antikhrista" (The Reconstruction of the Tower of Babel – a Last Chance for the All-Cunning Antichrist), Moscow, 1991, pp. 5-6 (MS).

[287] Shatilova, "Kritika zhurnala 'Vozvraschenie'" (A Criticism of the Journal 'Return'), *Tserkovnie Novosti (Church News)*, № 11 (67), November-December, 1997, p. 1.

[288] According to Vladimir Kirillov (personal communication, May, 2006), in one letter Archbishop Anthony writes that he had been corresponding with Lazarus for 15 (!) years before his ordination.

had been put forward by Stefan Krasovitsky and Zoya Krakhmalnikova – all dissident members of the MP. So ROCOR's first bishop inside Russia, according to this version, turned out to be the candidate, not of the Catacomb Church, but of dissident circles in the MP…[289]

Matushka Anastasia also claims that there was no other candidate than Fr. Lazarus, and that the bishops did not know of the existence of another good candidate in the person of Fr. Michael Rozhdestvensky.[290]

However, Vladimir Kirillov disagrees: "Judging from all the evidence, Fr. Michael was the candidate of Metropolitan Philaret (well-known to him and a true catacomb pastor), while the 'moderate' Vladyka Lazarus was pleasing to Archbishop Anthony (in the documents of Vladyka Anthony the name of Fr. Michael does not figure once). And the blessing for the ordination was given precisely to Fr. Michael by Metropolitan Philaret.

"History is silent as to whether Fr. Michael was told of the desire to make him a bishop or not. Let alone whether he agreed to it or not. It is a mysterious story. After all, all the contacts were through Fr. Lazarus, who did not begin this affair in order to put forward the candidature of another man. In any case, Bishop Barnabas [who consecrated Fr. Lazarus in 1982] was informed by Fr. Lazarus that Fr. Michael had not appeared at the meeting and that the only candidate was – he."[291]

Vladimir Kirillov argues that Fr. Lazarus engineered his own consecration at the expense of Fr. Michael. He put before Archbishop Anthony the idea "that chaos and savagery reigned in Russia because of the absence of a lawful bishop [Lazarus claimed that the last true bishop had died in 1957] and that for that reason many sympathizing priests sympathetic in the MP stayed there. And if only a bishop would appear, things would go well (of course, this turned out to be pure bluff). In the end the desire matured in Vladyka Anthony to help his brothers in Russia, the more so in that there was such a knowledgeable catacomb person as Fr. Lazarus (who, by the way, was not a person chosen by the catacombs and spoke exclusively in his own name)."[292]

Kirillov even claims – on the basis of the testimony of Vladyka Lazarus himself – that there was some kind of prior agreement to ordain, not Fr. Lazarus, but Fr. Michael: "In principle, according to the agreement, [Bishop Barnabas] should have ordained Fr. Michael to the episcopate. But, as Vladyka Lazarus told the author of these lines in 1994, Fr. Michael refused and then he [Lazarus] had to 'take his place'."[293]

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[289] Kirillov, personal communication, May, 2006.
[290] Shatilova, as quoted by Fr. Roman Pavlov.
[291] Kirillov, http://elmager.livejournal.com/66190.html?thread=283278.
[292] Kirillov, personal communication, May, 2006.
[293] Kirillov, personal communication, May, 2006.

Shatilova agrees with Kirillov that when Vladyka Barnabas was searching for a worthy candidate for ordination to the rank of Bishop of the Catacomb Church, Fr. Lazarus craftily suggested the widowed Fr. Michael, and himself was called to invite him to be ordained to the episcopate. On receiving the invitation with the signature of Hieromonk Lazarus (Zhurbenko), Fr. Michael Rozhdestvensky, naturally, did not go. Vladyka Barnabas was left with neither a choice nor time, and he was forced to consecrate Hieromonk Lazarus to the episcopate. Fr. Michael's position in relation to Vladyka Lazarus remained unchanging to the very end of his life [in 1988]."[294]

Be all that as it may, "after Vladyka Lazarus' secret ordination," writes Shumilo, "many catacomb communities of the TOC in the Kuban, Ukraine, in the Central Black Earth region of Russia, the Northern Caucasus, Belorussia, Siberia, Kazakhstan, Bashkiria and other regions, united around him.

"From the moment of the reestablishment of a canonical hierarchy in the Catacomb Church in the Homeland there began its gradual regeneration and building up. The secret Bishop Lazarus in a self-sacrificing way, in spite of the great risk for his own life, tirelessly went round the catacomb communities of the TOC scattered throughout the whole boundless expanse of Holy Russia, which had been turned by the God-fighters into the atheist USSR, serving secretly at night, preaching, confessing, communing and ordaining new catacomb priests. In the period from 1982 to 1990 alone Bishop Lazarus ordained about 20 new catacomb clergy for the TOC. Many catacomb priests who accepted ordination from the uncanonical catacomb hierarchies of the 'Sekachites' and the 'Alfeyevites' were united to him through correction of their ordinations."[295]

[294] Shatilova, "Kritika zhurnala 'Vozvraschenie'" (A Criticism of the Journal 'Return'), *Tserkovnie Novosti (Church News)*, № 11 (67), November-December, 1997, p. 1.
[295] Shumilo, "Kratkaia Spravka", op. cit.

## *GLASNOST' AND PERESTROIKA*

Meanwhile, in 1985, the Soviets' perception that they had to catch up with the United States in the economic and military fields propelled to the fore a leader, Gorbachev, who was prepared to begin a partial democratisation of the country. By the Providence of God, his reforming efforts, though designed to modernize and strengthen the communist Soviet State, led to its downfall and the resurgence of religion…

"In his first speech as leader," writes Bernard Simms, "Gorbachev announced his intention to maintain 'military-strategic parity with the aggressive NATO'. Like the tsarist modernizers of old, Gorbachev's first concern was not economic liberalization, popular standards of living or democratization by technological backwardness and low economic growth. What was innovative about his approach, however, was that it did not just conceive of internal change as a means to increasing external power through greater military mobilization. Instead, Gorbachev sought to expose and reform abuses in what he regarded as a basically just system. He also hoped that a more conciliatory attitude towards dissidents would reduce the terrible international battering the Soviet Union had received over human rights since the mid-1970s. Gorbachev now proclaimed a policy of reconstruction ('Perstroika') – a 'revolution[ary]… acceleration of the socio-economic and cultural development of Soviet society' – and openness ('Glasnost''). Greater freedom of expression, Gorbachev believed, would mobilize the intelligentsia and reduce incompetence and corruption. Dissidents were released, police repression was greatly eased, civil rights groups emerged, there was a revival of the [official] Russian Orthodox Church and a vibrant public sphere moved from the underground into the open…"[296]

At first, the communists showed no sign of the religious liberalization that was to come. In November, 1986, Gorbachev told party officials in Tashkent that religious faith and party membership were incompatible (this was probably aimed at Muslim communists): "There must be no let-up in the war against religion because as long as religion exists Communism cannot prevail. We must intensify the obliteration of all religions wherever they are being practised or taught."[297]

Again, in November, 1987 Gorbachev said to the Politburo: "Perestroika is no retreat from communism but rather a step toward the final realization of Marxist-Leninist utopia: a continuation of Lenin's ideas. Those who expect us to give up communism will be disappointed. In October, 1917 we parted from the Old World, rejecting it once and for all. We are moving toward a new world, the world of communism. We shall never turn off that road. Perestroika is a continuation of the October revolution…

"Comrades, do not be concerned about all you hear about glasnost' and democracy. These are primarily for outward consumption. There will be no serious

[296] Simms, *Europe: The Struggle for Supremacy,* London: Allen Lane, 2013, pp. 479-480.
[297] Golitsyn, op. cit., p. 116, who gives the date: 15 December, 1987.

internal change in the USSR other than for cosmetic purposes. Our purpose is to disarm America and let them fall asleep. We want to accomplish three things: (1) the Americans to withdraw conventional forces from Europe, (2) the Americans to withdraw nuclear forces from Europe, and (3) the Americans to stop proceeding with SDI."[298]

As Vladimir Bukovsky and Pavel Stroilov write: "By the beginning of the 1980s, the Soviet leadership had finally woken up to the fact that their system had entered a period of profound structural crisis. On the one hand, their economic model, unproductive and wasteful by definition, like all socialist models, had brought them to the brink of bankruptcy. On the other, their very 'success' in exporting that model to other countries was becoming an unbearable burden to carry on their shoulders. With their troops bogged down in Afghanistan, and with the Polish crisis looming large on their doorstep, the 'cost of Empire' had become virtually unsustainable. Simply put, they had suddenly realised that their economic base was too small for their global ambitions. Added to that a new round of the arms race forced on them by Ronald Reagan, falling oil prices and a growing discontent at home, and one could understand their sudden urge for reforms. A final blow came with Reagan's obsession with the 'Star Wars' project. The Americans might have been bluffing, but the Soviets had to follow suit regardless, trying to compete in the very sphere where they were most behind the West – high-tech."[299]

Again, in 1987 Gorbachev's chief ideologist, Alexander Yakovlev, said concerning the millenium of the Baptism of Rus' in 1988: "To God what is God's, to the Church what is the Church's, but to us, the Marxists, belongs the fullness of truth. And on the basis of these positions any attempts to represent Christianity as the 'mother' of Russian culture must be decisively rejected. And if the Russian Middle Ages merit the attention of historians, such cannot be said of the 1000-year date of Orthodoxy."[300] However, Gorbachev's need to pass from what Sir Geoffrey Hosking called "Mark 1" to "Mark 2" perestroika, dictated a change in policy towards the Church, too.[301] For the success of perestroika required sincere believers in the new order from members of the Church, not just party hacks. But in March, 1988 Constantine Kharchev, the head of the Council for Religious Affairs, told representatives of the higher party school in Moscow: "We attained our greatest success in controlling religion and suppressing its initiative amidst the priests and bishops of the Russian Orthodox Church. At first this gave us joy, but now it threatens to bring unforeseen consequences in its train… It is easier for the party to make a sincere believer [in God] into a believer in communism, too… The task that

[298] Gorbachev, in Dr. Olga Ackerly, "High Treason in ROCOR: The Rapprochment with Moscow", http://stnicholascandles.com/High_Treason.htm, pp. 13, 14.
[299] Bukovsky and Stroilov, *EUSSR: The Soviet Roots of European Integration,* Worcester Park: Sovereignty Publications, 2004, p. 4.
[300] Yakovlev, *Vestnik Akademii Nauk SSSR (*Herald of the Academy of Sciences of the USSR), 1987, № 6, p. 6.
[301] Hosking, *The Awakening of the Soviet Union*, London: Mandarin Paperbacks, 1991, p. 120.

presents itself before us is to educate a new type of priest; the selection and placing of a priest is the party's business."[302]

The critical point came in April, 1988, when Gorbachev met the patriarch and the senior metropolitans of the MP and staked out a new Church-State concordat reminiscent of the one between Stalin and Sergius in 1943. This concordat, combined with the underlying growth in religious feeling that had now been going on for several years, and the recovery of courage made easier by glasnost' and the release of most of the religious and political prisoners, made the millenial celebrations in June a truly pivotal event. Moreover, the very wide publicity given to the celebrations in the media gave a powerful further impulse to the movement of religious regeneration.

The fruits were soon evident for all to see. Most religious and political prisoners were freed; permission was given for the reopening of many hundreds of churches (1,830 in the first nine months of 1990); and religious societies and cooperatives of almost all denominations sprang up all over the country. Programmes on Orthodox art and architecture, and sermons by bearded clergy in cassocks, became commonplace on television; and commentators from right across the political spectrum began to praise the contribution of the Orthodox Church to Russian history and culture. There was openness, too, on the terrible cost to Russia of Leninism and Stalinism – one estimate, by the scientist D.I. Mendeleev, calculated that there were 125 million innocent victims of the communist yoke.[303]

There were negative aspects to this process. The True Orthodox Church remained outlawed; resistance to the opening of churches by local officials continued in the provinces; and religious activists objected to the adulterous mixing of religion and nationalism, and religion and humanist culture.[304] Moreover, the suspicion continued to exist that the party's new-found respect for religion was simply a tactical ploy, a case of reculer pour mieux sauter.

Such scepticism had some basis in reality. After all, no leading communist announced his conversion to Christianity. Moreover, in April, 1988, the month in which Gorbachev met the patriarch, an unsigned article in *Kommunist* hinted that the real aim of Gorbachev's rapprochement with the Church was to communize the Church rather than Christianize the party. And yet, if that was the party's aim, it backfired. For unlike the concordat of 1943, which did indeed have the effect of communising the Church, the concordat of 1988 seems to have helped to free Orthodox Christians from bondage to Communist ideology and coercion. For if the

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[302] Quoted in Bishop Valentine of Suzdal, "Put' nechestivykh pogibnet" (The Way of the Impious Will Perish), *Suzdal'skij Palomnik (Suzdal Pilgrim)*, №№ 18-20, 1994, pp. 96-97.

[303] Mendeleev, in I.F. Okhotin, "Velichie i blagodenstvie Rossii v Tsarstvovanie Imperatora Nikolaia II podtverzhdennoe v tsifrakh i faktakh" (The Greatness and Prosperity of Russia in the Reign of Emperor Nicholas II Confirmed in Figures and Facts), *Imperskij Vestnik (Imperial Herald),* October, 1989, № 8, p. 12.

[304] Cf. Gleb Anishchenko, "Vrata ada" (The Gates of Hell), *Posev* (Sowing), № 3 (1395), May-June, 1990, p. 135.

Church hierarchs continued to pay lip-service to "Leninist norms", this was emphatically not the case with many priests and laity, of whom Fr. Gleb Yakunin (liberated in 1987) was probably the most influential and best known.

This was most strikingly evident in March, 1990, when the elections returned 300 clerics of various faiths as deputies at various levels, including 190 Russian Orthodox, while the Communist Party candidates in the major cities were routed. In April, the Christian Democratic Movement, led by RSFSR deputies Fr. Gleb Yakunin, Fr. Vyacheslav Polosin and philosopher Victor Aksyuchits, held its founding congress. Then, on May 19, the birthday of Tsar Nicholas II, the Orthodox Monarchist Order met in Moscow, and called for the restoration of Grand-Duke Vladimir Kirillovich Romanov to the throne of all the Russias. Grand-Duke Vladimir was a member of ROCOR, so his recognition by the monarchists inside Russia would have meant an enormous increase in prestige for ROCOR at the expense of the patriarchate. However, the Grand-Duke spared the patriarchate this embarrassment by apostasizing to it and then dying in November, 1991.[305]

As communism began to collapse, rebellions broke out in the outlying republics. The most important of these was in the Western Ukraine, where the MP recruited many of its clergy. The MP's spiritual impotence was illustrated above all by its almost complete surrender of its western borderlands to the movement for Ukrainian ecclesiastical autocephaly. As we have seen, this movement began at the council of Lvov in 1946, when Stalin integrated the Uniates or Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church (UGCC), who are Catholic by faith, but Orthodox in ritual, into the MP, and forced those Uniates who did not want to become Orthodox to go underground. When Gorbachev came to power, the Uniates began agitating for the legalization of their Church.

They were supported, surprisingly, by the chairman of the Council for Religious Affairs, Constantine Kharchev, who insisted that local authorities keep the law in their dealings with believers and suggested the legalization of the Uniates and the free election of bishops. This roused the MP and members of the Ideology department of the Central Committee to complain about Kharchev to the Supreme Soviet. Kharchev was removed in June, 1989; but he made a telling comment about those who had removed him: "I suspect that some members of the Synod, from force of habit, have counted more on the support of the authorities than on their own authority in the Church".[306]

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[305] Archbishop Anthony of Los Angeles, "Velikij Knyaz' Vladimir Kirillovich i ego poseshchenie SSSR" (Great Prince Vladimir Kirillovich and his Visit to the USSR), *Pravoslavnij Vestnik* (Orthodox Herald), №№ 60-61, January-February, 1993.

There are sharp differences of opinion on whether Grand Duke Vladimir Kirillovich was the true heir to the Russian throne. For the argument in favour, see Archpriest Lev Lebedev, "Kogo i chego nam nuzhno berech'sa?", *Dal'nevostochnij Monarkhicheskij Vestnik,* № 18, 2006, pp. 1-3. And for the argument against, see Mikhail Nazarov, *Kto Naslednik Rossijskogo Prestola?* (Who is the Heir of the Russian Throne?), Moscow, 1996.

[306] *Ogonek* (Little Fire), № 44, October, 1989. Cf. *Keston News Service*, № 339, 30 November, 1989, pp. 16-18; № 341, 11 January, 1990, pp. 13-14.

The UGCC finally achieved legalization in January, 1990, just after Gorbachev met the Pope in Rome. This represented the second major diplomatic triumph of the Vatican in the communist bloc (after the legalization of Solidarnost in Poland) and the beginning of the re-establishment of Catholic power in Russia. However, even before they had recovered their freedom in law, the Uniates started taking over churches in Western Ukraine which they considered to be theirs by right. By December, 1991, 2167 nominally Orthodox parishes had joined the Uniates. Deprived of the help of the local authorities, who showed every sign of being on the side of the uniates, and discredited by its associations with communism, the MP seemed helpless to stop the rot.[307]

In October, 1989, a retired patriarchal bishop, Ioann Bondarchuk, announced the creation of the Ukrainian Autocephalous Orthodox Church (UAOC). He was immediately placed under ban by the patriarchate. However, the patriarchate decided to make some concessions to Ukrainian nationalist feeling by creating, in January, 1990, a supposedly autonomous but pro-Moscow Ukrainian Orthodox Church (UOC-MP), led by Metropolitan Philaret (Denisenko) of Kiev. Later, Philaret was defrocked and anathematised by the MP, so he formed a third independent Orthodox Church in the Ukraine – the so-called "Kievan Patriarchate" (UOAC-KP). Meanwhile, relations between the Orthodox and Catholics continued to deteriorate; and in March the Uniates withdrew from quadripartite discussions between Roman Catholics, Uniates, Russian Orthodox and the UOC-MP. Then, in June, the UOAC convened its first All-Ukrainian Council in Kiev, at which Mstyslav (Skrypnyk), who had been the leader of the Ukrainian autocephalists in the USA, was enthroned as the first patriarch in Ukrainian history. The UOAC received a further significant boost after the Ukraine achieved independence at the end of 1991.

In general the Russian Orthodox were opposed to the separation of Russia from Ukraine, regarding the Russians, Ukrainians and Belorussians as essentially three

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In March, 1988, at a meeting with teachers of the Higher Party School in Moscow Kharchev had made the following revealing comments: "Now a priest often has no connection with his parish, but he is born somewhere else, and is often even of a different nationality. He comes once a week to the parish in a car, serves the liturgy… and wants to know nothing more. Many even like this, after all they are not responsible for anything: neither for their flock, nor for the money, nor for the repair of the church. The official in giving him his licence warns him: take your 350 roubles, and don't poke your nose into anything…

"We, the party, have fallen into a trap of our own anti-ecclesiastical politics of bans and limitations, we have cut the pope off from the believers, but the believers have not begun as a result to trust the local organs more, while the party and the state is increasingly losing control over the believers. And in addition, as a consequence, we witness the appearance of unspiritual believers, that is, those who carry out the ritual side [of Church life] and are indifferent to everything. And the main thing – are indifferent to communism… It is easier for the party to make a sincere believer into a believer also in communism. The task before us is: the education of a new type of priest." (*Russkaia Mysl'* (Russian Thought), May 20, 1988, № 3725.

[307] One reason was that for years the MP had been teaching its seminarians, many of whom came from the Western Ukraine, that the Orthodox and the Catholics were "sister churches". 60% of those who joined the uniates graduated from Leningrad theological schools.

parts of one Slavic race who should keep together on the basis of their closely related religion, culture and history. However, this was not the view of most Ukrainian believers – or, at any rate, of those living in the western regions where Catholic influence was strongest. "The Ukrainian Autocephalous Orthodox Church," said Anatolius Krasikov, "is the expression of the resolute will of the Ukrainian people to finally liberate itself from the imperial [Russian] Orthodox Church which is an instrument of spiritual oppression against the Ukrainian people, aiming at its complete russification and enslavement."[308]

Contrary to the hopes and expectations of many, the MP remained devoted to the ideology of the failing Soviet regime to the very last minute. And yet even the patriarchate began to show signs of change under the influence of glasnost'. The first sign was at the church council in June, 1988, when the 1961 statute making priests subordinate to their parish councils was repealed. Then came the canonisation of Patriarch Tikhon in October, 1989. And then, on April 3, 1990 the Synod issued a declaration in which it (i) declared its neutrality with regard to different political systems and ideologies, (ii) admitted the existence of persecutions and pressures on the Church in the past, and (iii) tacitly admitted the justice of some of the criticism directed against it by the dissidents.[309] Finally, in May, Metropolitan Vladimir of Rostov, the head of a commission formed to gather material on priests and believers who had been persecuted, said that "up to now, the details of the repression of the Russian Orthodox Church have been ignored or falsified by official, state and even numerous Church figures in order to meet the accepted ideological stereotypes."[310]

The climax to this process was reached in June, when the polls revealed that the Church had now passed the Party, the Army and the KGB in popularity.[311] Could this be the beginning of the end of sergianism? Was this the moment when the MP, freed at last from the yoke of communism, and under no obligation to pursue the communist-imposed policy of ecumenism, would finally repent of its past and return to the True Church?…

[308] "The Exarch vs. the Patriarch", *Novoe Vremia (New Times)*, № 26, July, 1992, p. 13; in Karen Dawisha and Bruce Parrott, *Russia and the New States of Eurasia*, Cambridge University Press, 1994, p. 96.
[309] *Moskovskij Tserkovnij Vestnik (Moscow Ecclesiastical Herald)*, № 9 (27), April, 1990, pp. 1, 3.
[310] Oxana Antic, "The Russian Orthodox Church moves towards coming to terms with its past", *Report on the USSR*, March 8, 1991.
[311] *Moscow News*, June 3-10, 10-17, 1990.

## ***SERBIA TURNS NATIONALIST***

The Yugoslav communist dictator Tito died in 1980. Dejan Djokic writes: "As Yugoslavia entered the post-Tito era , there were increasing calls for the pursuit of the… ideal of finding what really happened in Yugoslavia in the Second World War. The official history [which minimised the ethnic elements and called it a 'national liberation war and a socialist revolution'] was bound to be challenged in the more relaxed political atmosphere which eventually emerged following the death of Tito in 1980, when the so-called 'hidden', unofficial, accounts of the war years began to appear. During what one Serbian weekly described as 'the burst of history', the official interpretation of Yugoslavia's recent past was questioned by every engaged intellectual. To many observers in the late 1980s, it must have seemed that the Second World War had broken out for the second time in Yugoslavia – verbally, for the time being…

"The most controversial and most debated issue was that of Croatian genocide against Serbs during the Second World War. Both the Ustaša-directed project to rid the Independent State of Croatia of its almost two million Serbs (and also Jews and Roma) and the nature and scope of the genocide have been the subject of scholarly works. The issue remains a bone of contention between Serbs and Croats… Moreover, some Serbs argue that anti-Serbianism has always been present among Croats and that the Ustaša genocide was merely the last phase of a long process…

"The nationalist discourse in Yugoslavia, but especially in Serbia and Croatia in the late 1980s and early 1990s, sought a reconciliation between victors and losers of the Second World War who belonged to the same nation; between Partisans and Cetniks in the case of Serbs, and Partisans and Ustašas in the case of Croats. In Yugoslavia at the time 'reconciliation' meant a homogenisation of the nation by reconciling ideological differences within the nation…"[312]

Reconciliation between communists and anti-communists also took place in the ecclesiastical sphere. In 1991, communion was restored between the Serbian Patriarchate and the Free Serbs.[313] The great majority of the Serbs were now nationalists.

This process also affected the Communist Party, up to then a bastion of internationalism… From 1985, as perestroika began in Russia, the writing was on the wall for the old-style communists throughout Eastern Europe. They had a choice if they wanted to stay in power: either become European-style democrats, or take the nationalist road. In practice they adopted a mixture of both courses. However, in some countries, such as Russia, democracy was the preferred option, whereas in the Balkans it was nationalism.

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[312] Djokic, "Coming to Terms with the Past: Former Yugoslavia", *History Today,* vol. 54 (6), June, 2004, pp. 18-19.

[313] *Pravoslavije*, June 1, 1991; *Keston News Service*, № 379, 11 July, 1991, p. 4; *Anglican and Eastern Churches Association*, December, 1991, pp. 29-31.

"Balkan communist regimes," writes Bernard Simms, "co-opted nationalism as a new legitimating ideology. In Romania, Nicolae Ceauşescu sought confrontation with the substantial Hungarian minority, whose Transylvanian and Banat villages were singled out for particular attention in the campaign of rural 'systematization'. In Bulgaria, the regime turned on the local Turkish population in late 1984 and forced them to change their names, restricted their use of the Turkish language, and closed down mosques, all in the name of stamping out an alleged 'fifth column' of 'terrorists' and 'separatists'. In Yugoslavia, the Serb leader, Slobodan Milošević, rose to power through the articulation of a Serb nationalist agenda."[314]

As Niall Ferguson writes, "it is clear that Milošević's principal motive in playing the Serbian nationalist card was to avoid the fate of Communist leaders in other East European countries. While they had been swept away by the post-1989 wave of nationalism. Milošević was able to ride it; indeed, to whip it up. And for ten years his strategy worked…"[315]

As ever, the main focus of Serbian nationalism was the province of Kosovo, which had been part of Serbia in the late Middle Ages, but whose majority population since the Turkish conquest was Albanian…

In the autumn of 1985, writes Noel Malcolm, a local Kosovan activist, Kosta Bulatović, who was originally from Montenegro, organized a petition "which became known as 'petition 2,016', after the number of signatures it attracted: the text contained not only demands for protection, but also a gross historical claim about the presence of 300,000 Albanians who had crossed into Kosovo from Albania since 1941 (the implication being that they should all be sent back). In February 1986 a group of 160 Serbs and Montenegrins from Kosovo presented their complaints to the federal assembly in Belgrade…

"In April 1987 news came from Kosovo that the group of Serb and Montenegrin activists round Bulatović was intending to bring another large protest in Belgrade. They asked the Serbian Party president, Stambolić, to come and speak to them first in the town of Kosovo Polje; reluctant to enter such a hostile bear-pit (he had already made several speeches criticizing Serbian nationalism), he sent his deputy, Slobodan Milošević, instead. As Stambolić later recalled, Milošević had never shown any interest in Kosovo, and had even said to him on one occasion: 'Forget about the provinces, let's get back to Yugoslavia'. But the events in Kosovo Polje on 24 April 1987 were to change all that. While Milošević listened to angry speeches by local spokesmen in the 'House of Culture', fighting broke out between the large crowd of Serbs outside and the police, who responded with their batons. The fighting had been carefully planned by one of the local Serb leaders, Miroslav Šolević (local, at least, in the sense that he lived there: he had moved to Kosovo from the Serbian city of Niš): as he later admitted, he had arranged for a truck full of stones to be parked

[314] Simms, *Europe: The Struggle for Supremacy,* London: Allen Lane, 2013, pp. 481-482.
[315] Ferguson, *The War of the World,* London: Penguin, 2007, pp. 630-631.

outside the building, to give the Serbs a copious supply of ammunition. Milošević broke off the meeting and came out to speak to the crowd, where he uttered – luckily for him, on camera – the words on which his entire political future would be built: 'No one should dare to beat you!' The crowd, enraptured by these words, began chanting 'Slobo, Slobo!' With a skill which he had never displayed before, Milošević made an eloquent speech in defence of the sacred rights of the Serbs. From that day, his nature as a politician changed; it was as if a powerful new drug had entered his veins.

"By exploiting the issue of Kosovo Milošević quickly turned himself into a 'national' leader, a role which enabled him to quell all opposition to his takeover of the Communist Party machine…"[316]

"The situation in Kosovo, which by the early 1980s had reached a state of permanent crisis and military occupation, became the main focus for the revival of Serbian nationalism. As early as 1968, Serbian nationalist Communists such as Dobrica Ćosić were complaining about the reversal of policy in Kosovo after Ranković's fall. 'One could witness even among the Serbian people a re-ignition of the old historical goal and national idea – the unification of the Serbian people into a single state,' he said. This statement, phrased as a warning but issued in the spirit of a threat, caused Ćosić to be expelled from the Central Committee… The Serbian Orthodox Church also saw its opportunity to revive the sense of religious identity in the literary and political culture of the country; and the Serbs' obsessively possessive claims about Kosovo were indeed partly based on the fact that some of the Serbian Orthodox Church's oldest monasteries and church buildings, including the patriarchate itself [at Peć], were located in the province.

"Together with a revival of [ecumenist] Orthodoxy, there was also a revival of interest in the forbidden topic of the Četniks during the second world war. And just as – indeed, because – the Communist policy had been to damn all the Četniks uncritically as fascist collaborators, so now the reaction of Serb nationalists was to praise them almost equally uncritically. The regime would have reason to regret its long-lasting suppression of objective historical studies of the war. Dobrica Ćosić published a novel in 1985 which featured a sympathetic portrait of the Četnik ideologist, Dragiša Vasić; and in the same year a book about the Četniks by the historian Veselin Djuretić was launched at a party hosted by the Serbian Academy of Sciences. This event was an important turning-point, a signal that Serbian nationalism could now be openly embraced by the intellectual establishment in Belgrade. In January of the following year two hundred prominent Belgrade academics and writers signed a petition which referred in hysterical terms to the 'Albanian aggression' and 'genocide' in Kosovo. All the old Serbian resentments now came to the surface: 'a rigged political trial of the Serbian nation and its history has been going on for decades', it complained.

[316] Malcolm, *Kosovo*, London: Papermac, 1998, pp. 339, 341-342.

"Later in 1986 a 'Memorandum' was drawn up by the Serbian Academy of Sciences (or at least, by a committee of it, whose membership is known to have included Ćosić), in which grievances about Kosovo were combined with the open accusation that Tito's policies had aimed at the weakening of Serbia. 'Nationalism', it complained, had been 'created from above'. This was a reference not to Serbian nationalism, of course, which these writers were busily helping to create from their own vantage-point, but to the national identities of Croats, Slovenes, Macedonians, Montenegrins and Bosnian Muslims. The Memorandum claimed that a sinister programme of assimilation was under way in Croatia, designed to turn the Serbs there into Croats, and it also complained that ethnic Serb writers in places such as Montenegro and Bosnia were being described as writing not Serbian literature but 'Montenegrin' or 'Bosnian' literature instead. The fundamental argument of the Memorandum was that the 'Serb people' throughout Yugoslavia was a kind of primary entity, possessing a unitary set of rights and claims which transcended any mere political or geographical divisions: 'The question of the integrity of the Serb people and its culture in the whole of Yugoslavia poses itself as a crucial question for that people's survival and development.' It was the pursuit of that 'integrity' which would eventually destroy Yugoslavia…"[317]

Vas Ćubrilović, a member of the Academy, had been acting and speaking in the cause of Serbian revolutionary nationalism since 1914. As Mark Almond writes, he "complained that the Serb authorities had been too weak and 'Western'. Serbia ought to learn from her old enemy: 'Turkey brought to the Balkans the customs of the Sheriat… Even the Balkan Christians learned from the Turks that not only state power and dominion, but also home and property are won and lost by the sword.' He argued that since the Albanians still outbred the effects of Serbian recolonisation, 'the only way and the only means to cope with them is the brute force of an organized state, in which we [Serbs] have always been superior to them.' The necessary precondition for a mass expulsion of Albanians from their ancestral homes was 'the creation of a suitable psychosis'.

"In order to create an atmosphere of fear and a willingness to leave, the Serbian state ought to use very un-Balkan tactics: 'The law must be enforced to the letter… fines and imprisonments, the ruthless application of all police dispositions, such as the prohibition of smuggling, cutting forests, damaging farmland, leaving dogs unchained, compulsory labour and any other measures that an experienced police force can contrive.' In addition, property titles should be questioned and business permits withdrawn. Islam should be harassed and the daughters of Muslims forced into school with boys. But all of these measures were only the background to state-sponsored terror: 'We should distribute weapons to our colonists. The old forms of Chetnik action should be organized and secretly assisted.' The Montenegrins should be unleashed on the Albanians – 'This conflict should be prepared by… our trusted people' – and then once the Albanians replied to force with force, 'the whole affair should be presented as a conflict between clans.' Ćubrilović recognized the need to pacify Western opinion with the argument that any violence was just an old-

[317] Malcolm, *Bosnia,* pp. 205-207.

fashioned tribal war. He therefore preferred to keep the Serbian Army out of action except when it was 'secretly burning down Albanian villages and city quarters'. Chetniks should be used to suppress the Albanians whenever the action was under scrutiny so that the tribal nature could be emphasized."[318]

Ćubrilović's remarks about the need to copy the Turks were also both cynical and insightful. As Almond comments, "in order to rid oneself of the domination and even the legacy of the hated 'Turk', his worst features must be assimilated into the Serbian character. Ottoman brutality had to be matched or even surpassed in order to save Serbdom from the Turkish legacy of an Albanianised Kosovo."[319] Moreover, Ćubrilović was prescient in seeing how useful the argument that "any violence was just an old-fashioned tribal war" would be to Serbian politicians. It was used for years by western diplomats as an excuse for their inactivity in relation to what was not tribal, but strictly ideological – the implementation of the ideology of Greater Serbia similar to the Jews' implementation of the ideology of Eretz Israel.

The Serbian nationalists gave wildly exaggerated figures for the supposed emigration or expulsion of Serbs from Kosovo. In this they were supported by the Serbian Church, notably the leading archimandrite (now metropolitan), Atanasije Jevtić. The nationalists claimed that the main reason for Serbian emigration from Kosovo was Albanian atrocities, particularly, according to Atanasije Jevtić, the rape of girls and old women in villages and convents… "As one Albanian writer later noted, the impression given by many Serbian publications was 'that Albanians rape anyone they can get hold of, old women, children, married women, teenagers, and that they rape them in houses, in public places, in the street…' The only serious study of this issue was carried out by an independent committee of Serbian lawyers and human rights experts in 1990. Analysing all the statistics on rape and attempted rape for the 1980s, they found first of all that the frequency of this crime was significantly lower in Kosovo than in other parts of Yugoslavia: while inner Serbia, on average, had 2.43 cases per year for every 10,000 men in the population, the figure in Kosovo was 0.96. They also found that in the great majority of cases in Kosovo (71 per cent) the assailant and the victim were of the same nationality. Altogether the number of cases where an Albanian committed or attempted the rape of a Serbian woman was just thirty-one in the whole period from 1982 to 1989; an average of fewer than five per year…"[320]

In fact, the main cause of Serbian emigration was economic. "Official reports on the reasons given for emigration from Kosovo by the 14,921 Serbs who left in the period 1983-7 present a very different picture. In 95 per cent of all cases the emigrants cited either economic or family reasons; in only eleven individual cases (less than 0.1 per cent) were pressures from Albanians given as the main cause of emigration."[321]

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[318] Almond, *Europe's Backyard War,* London: Mandarin, 1994, pp. 195-196.
[319] Almond, op. cit., p. 196.
[320] Malcolm, *Kosovo*, p. 339.
[321] Malcolm, *Kosovo*, p. 331.

By 1991 the Serb-Montenegrin element in the Kosovan population had dwindled to 11 per cent, while the Albanian proportion had risen to 82 per cent. But the main reason for this was neither Serbian emigration nor Albanian immigration, but "the very high rate of abortion among the Serbs. By 1994 it was reported that Serbia had the highest abortion rate in the whole of Europe. For every 100 live births in inner Serbia there were 214 abortions; the equivalent figure for the whole population of Kosovo… was just twenty. While Albanian women were hostile on religious and cultural grounds to abortion, it had become an accepted part of cultural normality among the Serbs. On this point, at least, it could be said that they had only themselves to blame…"[322]

On June 28, 1989, on the 600th anniversary of the Battle of Kosovo, Milošević organized a meticulously organized jamboree at the Gazimestan shrine near Pristina, at which he observed that "the current anniversary was being held at a time when Serbia had finally regained its 'state, national, and spiritual integrity', and that the Serbian defeat of the fourteenth century, as well as later Serbian failures including those during the Tito period, had occurred owing to discord within the ranks of the Serb elite and political compromises by Serbia's leaders. 'Six centuries ago,' Milošević pointed out, Serbia had fought the Turks and served as a 'bulwark defending European culture, civilization and religion.' Alluding to a perennial theme of Serbian culture, Milošević observed that although some might claim the Serbian nation had been defeated at the Battle of Kosovo, the episode could also be regarded as 'heroic' because of the Serbs' valiant performance, and the fact that the victorious Turkish Sultan had been stabbed to death – the first Ottoman ruler to be killed in war – by a Serbian commander. Milošević was well aware that, although the 1389 battle had been technically a military defeat, most Serbs regarded the event and its aftermath as emblematic of how such a defeat can engender a stubbornness and fortitude to struggle against non-Serb control. He left it to his audience to ponder over the clear implication that perhaps the very traits that had allowed Serbs to overcome the tribulations of Ottoman rule might also assist them in dealing with their current concerns regarding Kosovo. Tactfully in view of his position as a high official in a multinational federation, Milošević urged toleration among the various nations and nationalities of socialist Yugoslavia, and also carefully avoided referring by name to the Albanians of Kosovo (who had boycotted the ceremony) or any other specific ethnic group. But near the end of his speech he reminded the gathering that six centuries after the Battle of Kosovo Serbs were 'again today engaged in battles and facing battles'. Indeed he observed ominously that although the struggles presently involving the Serbs were 'not armed battles… such things cannot be excluded. But no matter what their character, battles can't be won without decisiveness, bravery and a readiness to sacrifice.' Milošević had put his fellow Serbs on notice regarding what measures he might take, and what might be expected of them. In the excitement of the historical celebration, his audience appeared wildly eager to follow their determined new leader. Milošević's remarks were made two

[322] Malcolm, *Kosovo*, p. 333.

years before socialist Yugoslavia's disintegration and the warfare that would soon follow in its wake…"[323]

Meanwhile, in December, 1989 Ceausescu's regime collapsed in Romania, and the Old Calendarists under Metropolitan Silvestru, acquired freedom. Persecution had continued right up to the end of the communist period. Thus "on June 5/18, 1988, several officials from the Grumăzeşti City Hall, Grumăzeşti County, entered the convent [of Brădiţel] followed by workmen in overalls, whom they had brought along to demolish the edifice. A confrontation between the forces of light and darkness took place. All of the nuns – young and old, healthy and infirm – formed a living barrier by encircling the new Church. Lifting their hands up to Heaven and with tears in their eyes, they implored the officials and the workmen not to demolish the Church, reminding them of the dread judgement of God and the eternal life that follows. Blinded by Satan, the officials remained unmoved. With the bells tolling, the nuns steeled themselves, resolving to die beneath the bulldozers. But God softened the hearts of the workmen, who, spiritually shaken by the devotion of the nuns, refused to demolish the Church, preferring rather to lose their jobs or even to have their hands cut off, as they had been threatened. One representative among the authorities opted for a compromise solution: fining the convent 18,000 lei and halting any further construction. Legal proceedings were initiated against the Abbess, Schema-nun Teofana (Nistor) (1928-1990), but her trial was repeatedly postponed. Meanwhile, the work [on the convent] continued, and on August 4/17, 1988, the arches for the roof were in place. Then, through the will of God, the Communist dictatorship came to an end on December 9/22, 1989, and everything turned out well for these monastic laborers in the garden of the Mother of God…"[324]

[323] Leonard J. Cohen, "The Milošević Dictatorship: Institutionalizing Power and Ethno-Populism in Serbia", in Bernd J. Fischer, *Balkan Strongmen,* London: Hurst, 2006, pp. 429-430.
[324] Constantin Bujor, *Resisting unto Blood: Sixty-Five Years of Persecution of the True (Old Calendar) Orthodox Church of Romania (October 1924 – December 1989),* Etna, CA: Center for Traditionalist Orthodox Studies, 2003, pp. 157-158.